Boogiepop
doesn't laugh

ブギーポップは笑わない
2

Art by
Kouji Ogata
Story by
Kouhei Kadono

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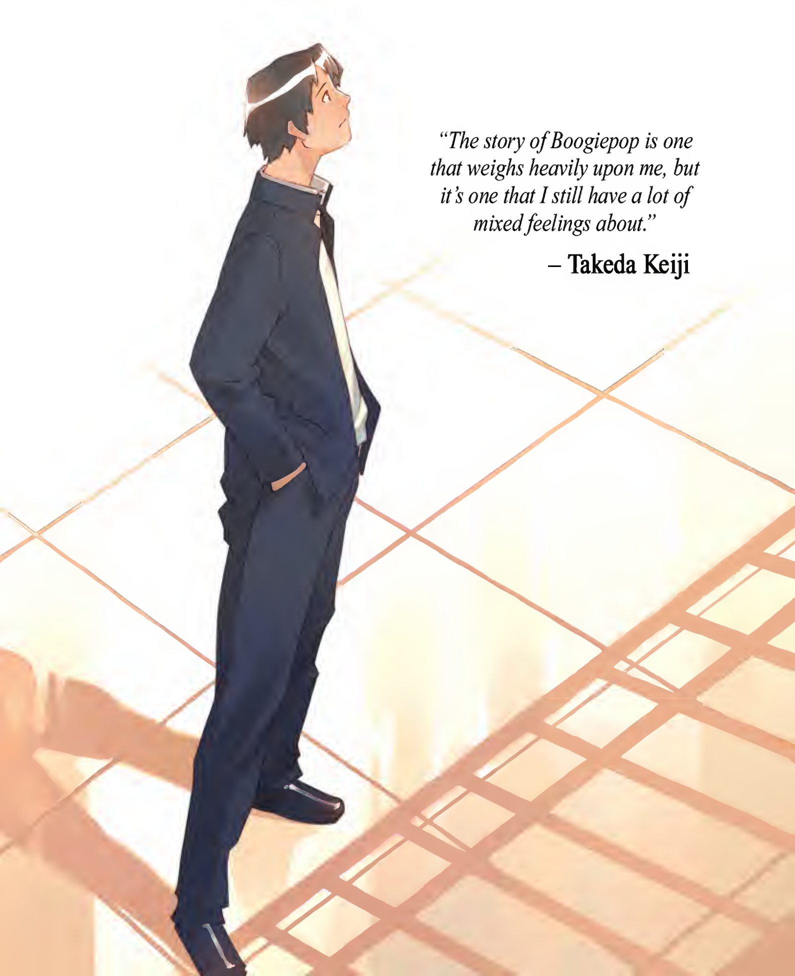
"I am automatic. When I detect adversity approaching, I float up out of Miyashita Touka. That's why I am ***Boogiepop****--phantasmal, like bubbles."*



"The story of Boogiepop is one that weighs heavily upon me, but it's one that I still have a lot of mixed feelings about."

– Takeda Keiji

"I kinda just wanted to mess with your mind a little. Sorry."

– Miyashita Touka

"Ultimately...that was ***Boogiepop****."*

– Kirima Nagi

CHAPTER 12 P9
CHAPTER 13 P25
CHAPTER 14 P41

"Once you've seen me...you can't be allowed to live."

– Manticore

"Congratulations...now you're officially our enemy."

– Saotome Masami

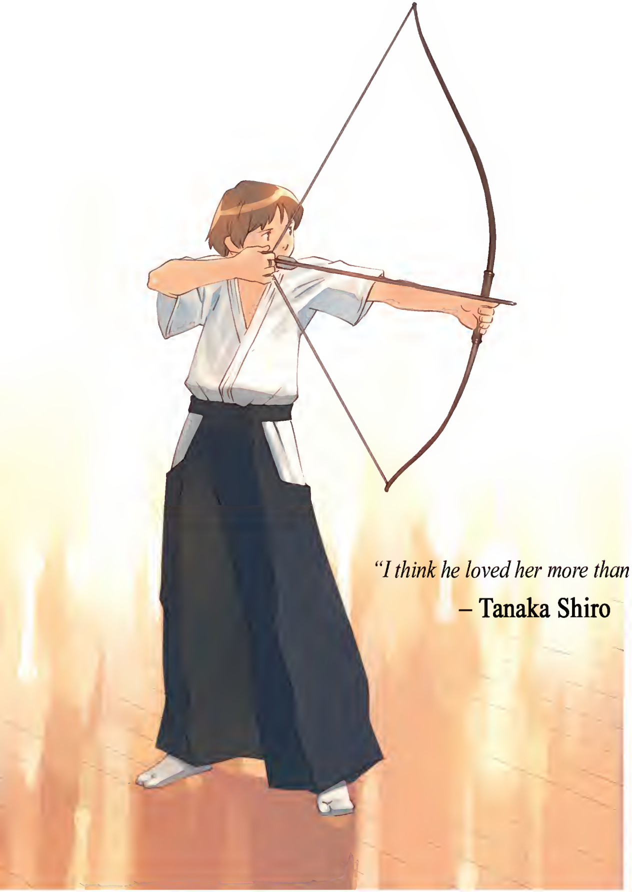
P57 CHAPTER 15

P73 CHAPTER 16

P89 CHAPTER 17

"Apparently the Boogiepop stories were being kept secret from boys. It was a myth only the girls knew."

– Suema Kazuko



"I think he loved her more than I did."

– Tanaka Shiro

"An alien. He took her back with him into space."

– Kimura Akio

"So it ultimately amounts to nothing."

– Niitoki Kei

P113 CHAPTER 18
P137 CHAPTER 19
P161 CHAPTER 20

P185 CHAPTER 21
P209 FINAL CHAPTER
P233 SKETCH BOOK

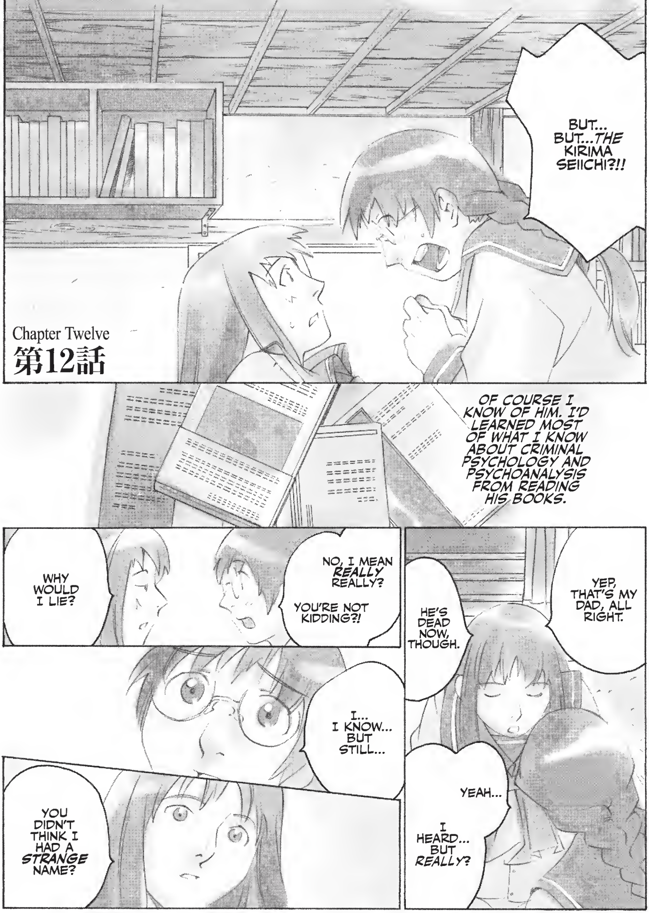
"Why can't we pick who we fall in love with? It would be so much easier..."

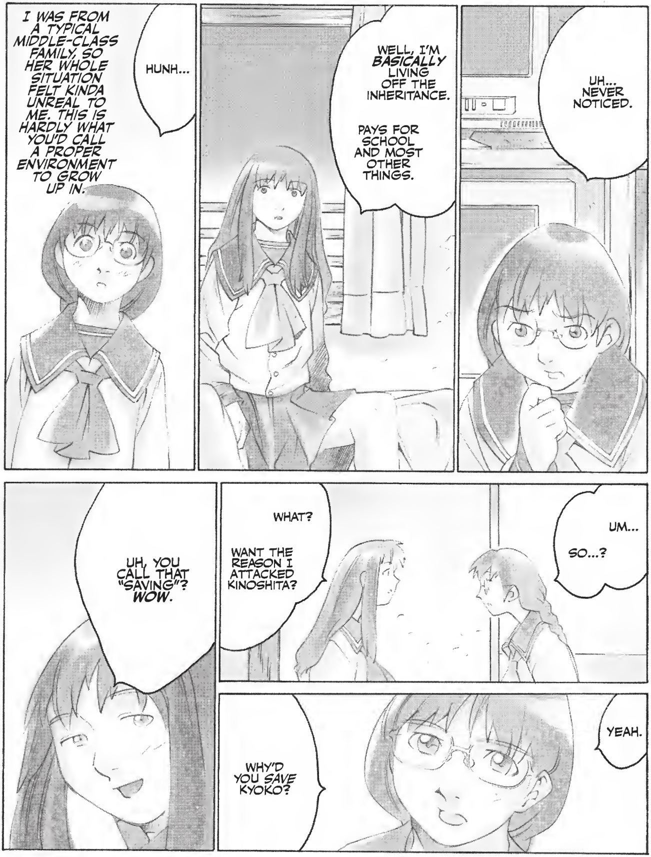
– Kamikishiro Naoko

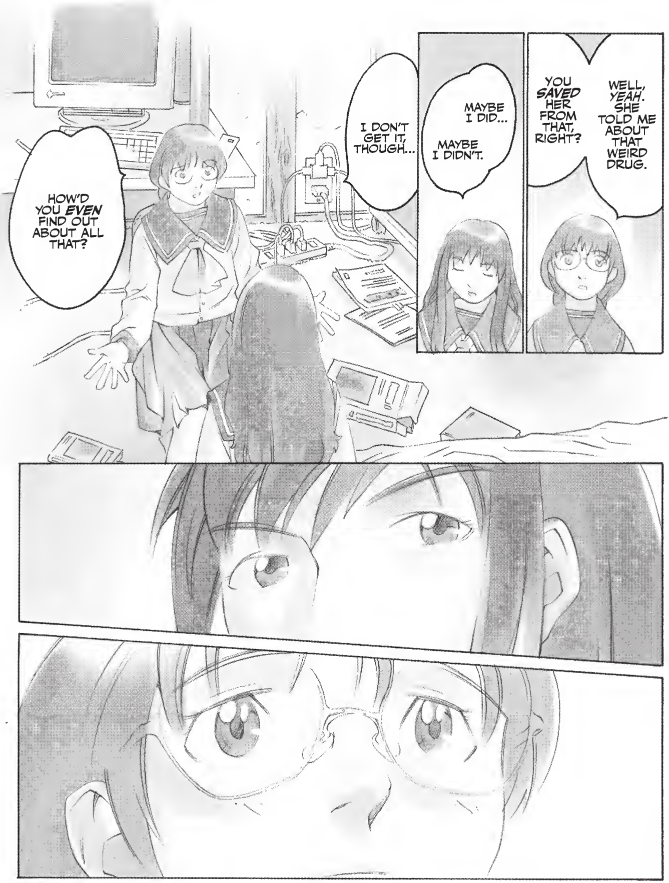
"Which is it? Which is the truth?"

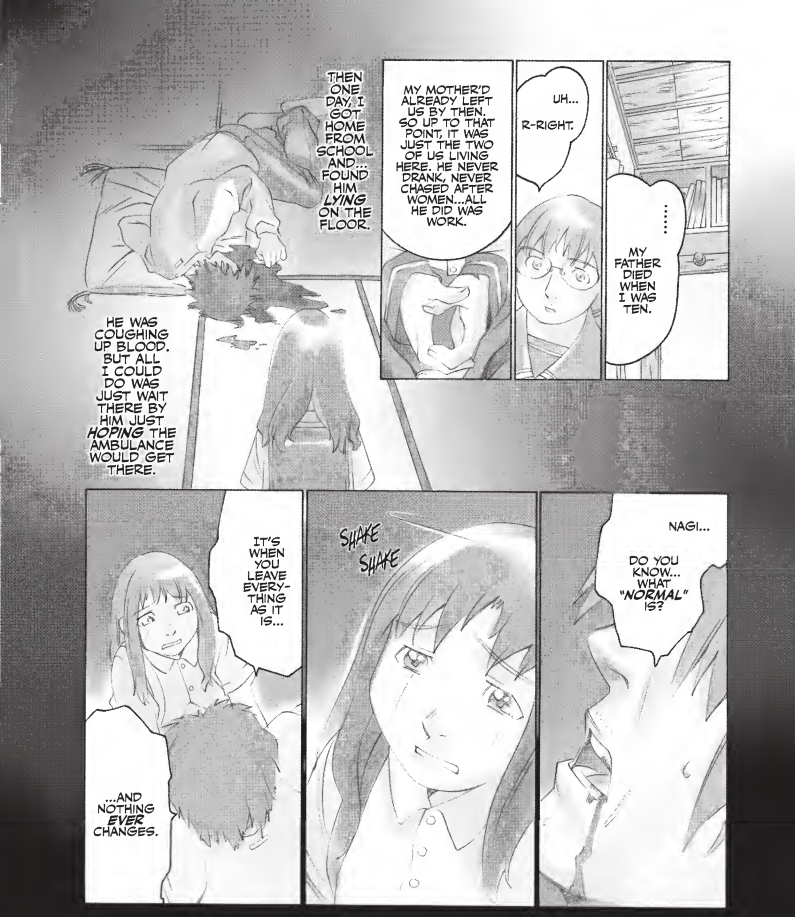
– Echoes

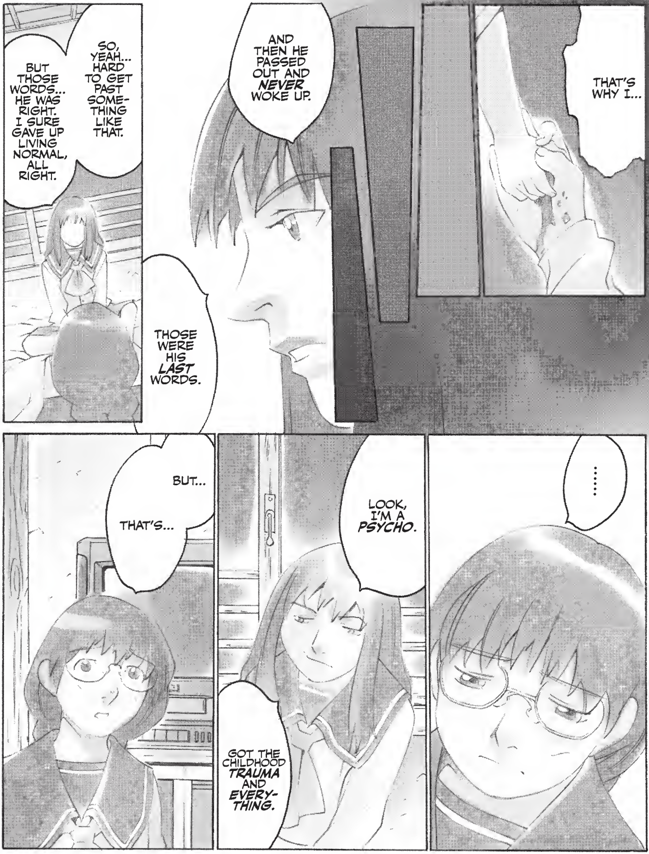
Chapter Twelve
第12話

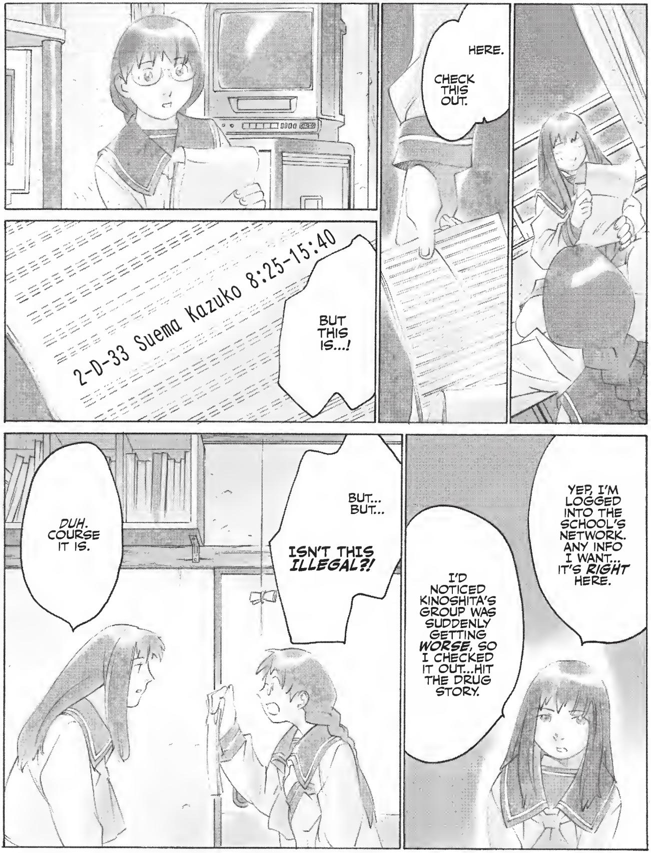

BUT... BUT...*THE* KIRIMA SEIICHI?!!
OF COURSE I KNOW OF HIM. I'D LEARNED MOST OF WHAT I KNOW ABOUT CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS FROM READING HIS BOOKS.
NO, I MEAN *REALLY* REALLY?
YOU'RE NOT KIDDING?!
WHY WOULD I LIE?
YEP, THAT'S MY DAD, ALL RIGHT.
HE'S DEAD NOW, THOUGH.
I... I KNOW... BUT STILL...
YOU DIDN'T THINK I HAD A *STRANGE* NAME?
YEAH...
I HEARD... BUT *REALLY*?

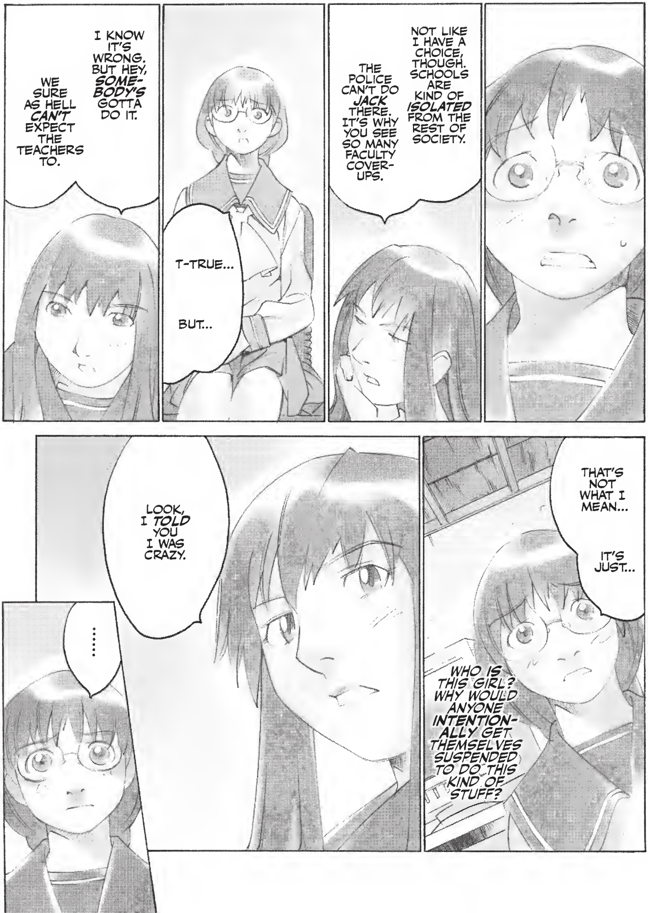

UH... NEVER NOTICED.
WELL, I'M *BASICALLY* LIVING OFF THE INHERITANCE.
PAYS FOR SCHOOL AND MOST OTHER THINGS.
HUNH...
I WAS FROM A TYPICAL MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY, SO HER WHOLE SITUATION FELT KINDA UNREAL TO ME. THIS IS HARDLY WHAT YOU'D CALL A PROPER ENVIRONMENT TO GROW UP IN.
UM...
SO...?
WHAT?
WANT THE REASON I ATTACKED KINOSHITA?
YEAH.
WHY'D YOU *SAVE* KYOKO?
UH, YOU CALL THAT "SAVING"? *WOW*.

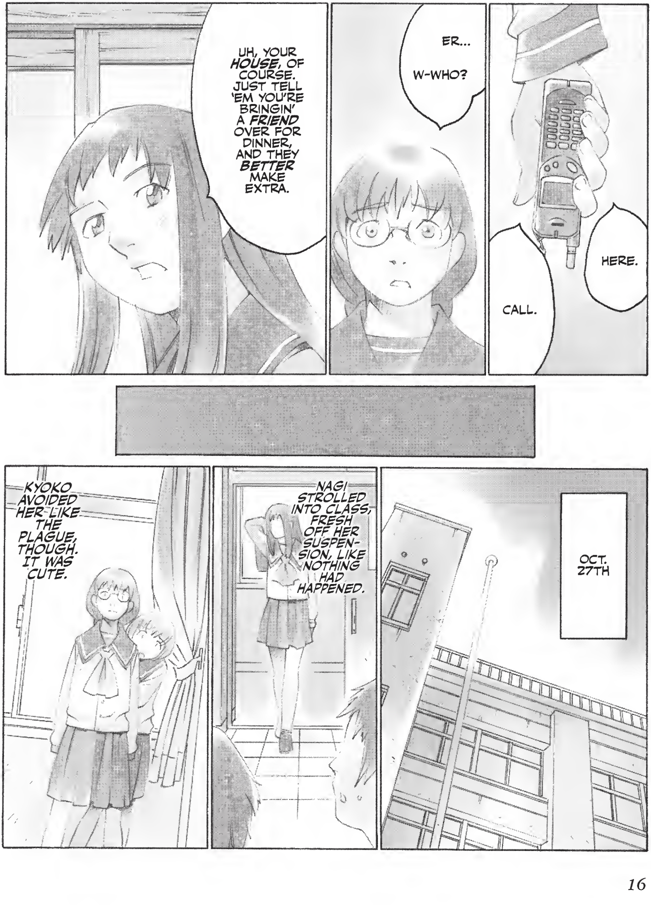

WELL, *YEAH*. SHE TOLD ME ABOUT THAT WEIRD DRUG.
YOU ***SAVED*** HER FROM THAT, RIGHT?
MAYBE I DID...
MAYBE I DIDN'T.
I DON'T GET IT, THOUGH...
HOW'D YOU ***EVEN*** FIND OUT ABOUT ALL THAT?

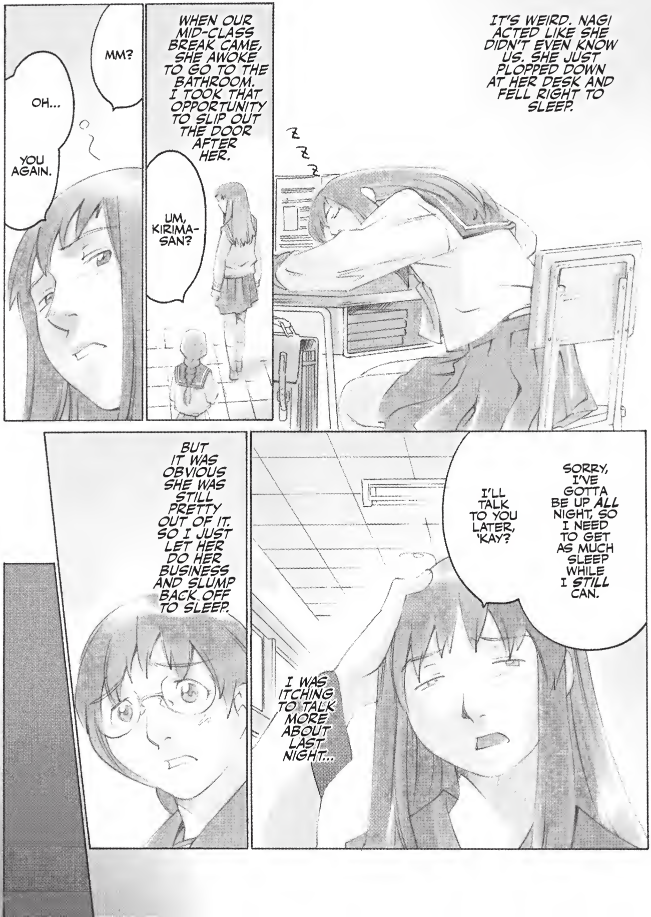

......
MY FATHER DIED WHEN I WAS TEN.
UH...
R-RIGHT.
MY MOTHER'D ALREADY LEFT US BY THEN. SO UP TO THAT POINT, IT WAS JUST THE TWO OF US LIVING HERE. HE NEVER DRANK, NEVER CHASED AFTER WOMEN...ALL HE DID WAS WORK.
THEN ONE DAY, I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL AND... FOUND HIM *LYING* ON THE FLOOR.
HE WAS COUGHING UP BLOOD. BUT ALL I COULD DO WAS JUST WAIT THERE BY HIM JUST *HOPING* THE AMBULANCE WOULD GET THERE.
NAGI...
DO YOU KNOW... WHAT "*NORMAL*" IS?
SHAKE SHAKE
IT'S WHEN YOU LEAVE EVERYTHING AS IT IS...
...AND NOTHING *EVER* CHANGES.

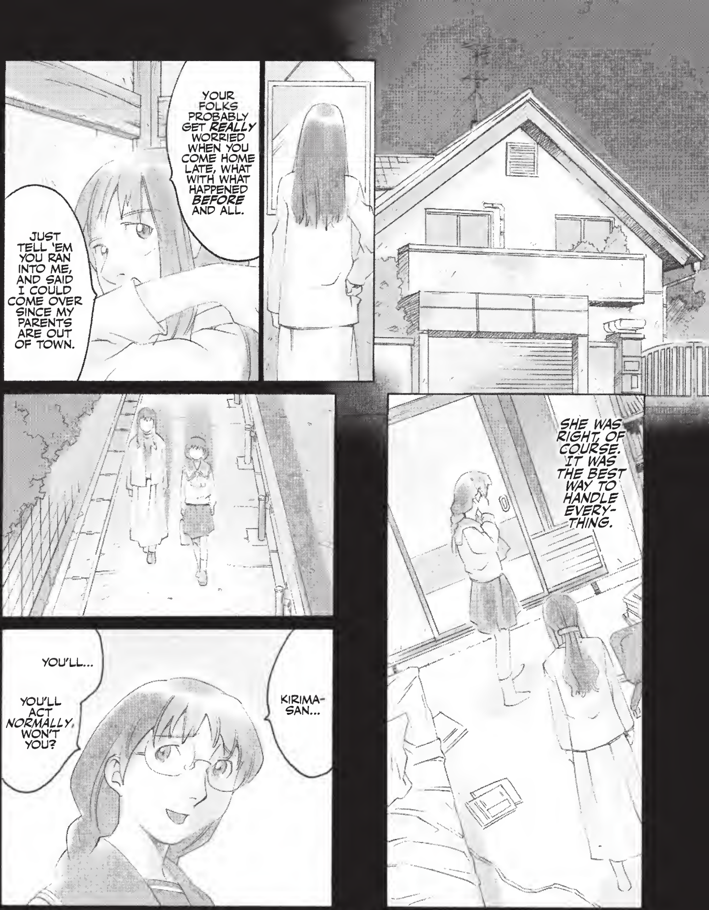

THAT'S WHY I...
AND THEN HE PASSED OUT AND NEVER WOKE UP.
THOSE WERE HIS LAST WORDS.
SO, YEAH... HARD TO GET PAST SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
BUT THOSE WORDS... HE WAS RIGHT. I SURE GAVE UP LIVING NORMAL, ALL RIGHT.
......
LOOK, I'M A PSYCHO.
GOT THE CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND EVERYTHING.
BUT...
THAT'S...

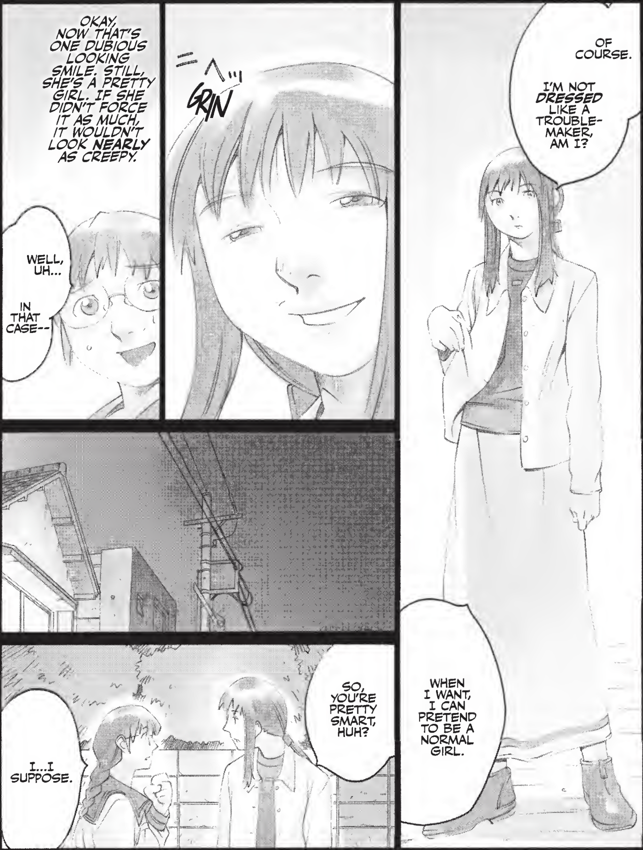

HERE.
CHECK THIS OUT.
2-D-33 Suema Kazuko 8:25-15:40
BUT THIS IS...!
YEP, I'M LOGGED INTO THE SCHOOL'S NETWORK. ANY INFO I WANT... IT'S *RIGHT* HERE.
I'D NOTICED KINOSHITA'S GROUP WAS SUDDENLY GETTING *WORSE*, SO I CHECKED IT OUT...HIT THE DRUG STORY.
BUT... BUT...
ISN'T THIS *ILLEGAL?!*
DUH. COURSE IT IS.

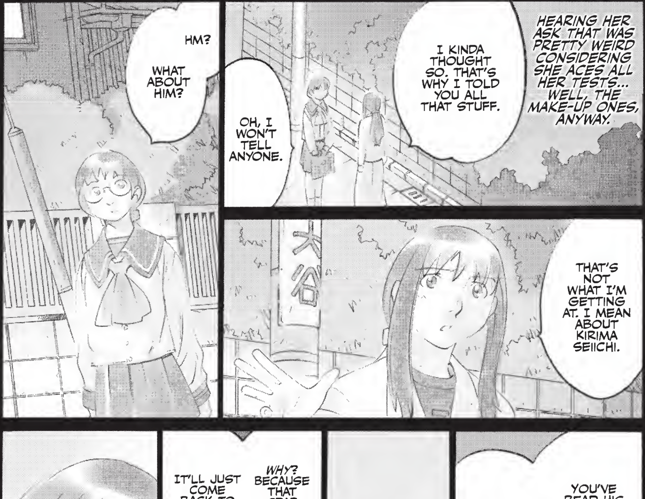

I KNOW IT'S WRONG. BUT HEY, *SOMEBODY'S* GOTTA DO IT.
WE SURE AS HELL *CAN'T* EXPECT THE TEACHERS TO.
T-TRUE...
BUT...
NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE, THOUGH. SCHOOLS ARE KIND OF *ISOLATED* FROM THE REST OF SOCIETY.
THE POLICE CAN'T DO *JACK* THERE. IT'S WHY YOU SEE SO MANY FACULTY COVER-UPS.
......
LOOK, I *TOLD* YOU I WAS CRAZY.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...
IT'S JUST...
WHO IS THIS GIRL? WHY WOULD ANYONE INTENTIONALLY GET THEMSELVES SUSPENDED TO DO THIS KIND OF STUFF?

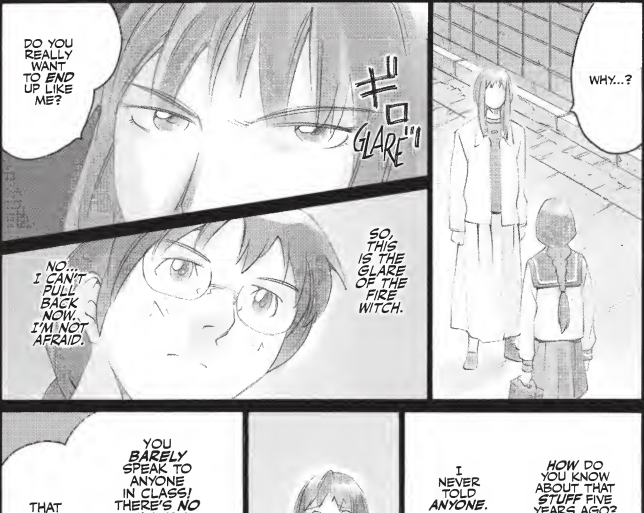

HERE.
CALL.
ER...
W-WHO?
UH, YOUR *HOUSE*, OF COURSE. JUST TELL 'EM YOU'RE BRINGIN' A *FRIEND* OVER FOR DINNER, AND THEY *BETTER* MAKE EXTRA.
OCT. 27TH
NAGI STROLLED INTO CLASS, FRESH OFF HER SUSPENSION, LIKE NOTHING HAD HAPPENED.
KYOKO AVOIDED HER LIKE THE PLAGUE, THOUGH. IT WAS CUTE.

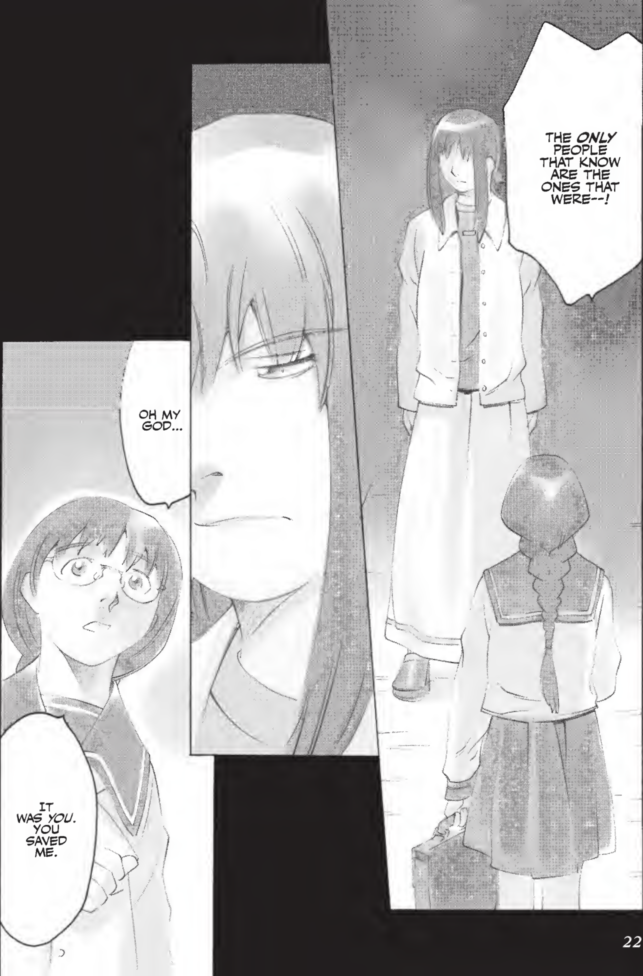

IT'S WEIRD. NAGI ACTED LIKE SHE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW US. SHE JUST PLOPPED DOWN AT HER DESK AND FELL RIGHT TO SLEEP.
Z Z Z
WHEN OUR MID-CLASS BREAK CAME, SHE AWOKE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM. I TOOK THAT OPPORTUNITY TO SLIP OUT THE DOOR AFTER HER.
UM, KIRIMA-SAN?
MM?
OH...
YOU AGAIN.
SORRY, I'VE GOTTA BE UP *ALL* NIGHT, SO I NEED TO GET AS MUCH SLEEP WHILE I *STILL* CAN.
I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER, 'KAY?
I WAS ITCHING TO TALK MORE ABOUT LAST NIGHT...
BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS SHE WAS STILL PRETTY OUT OF IT. SO I JUST LET HER DO HER BUSINESS AND SLUMP BACK OFF TO SLEEP.

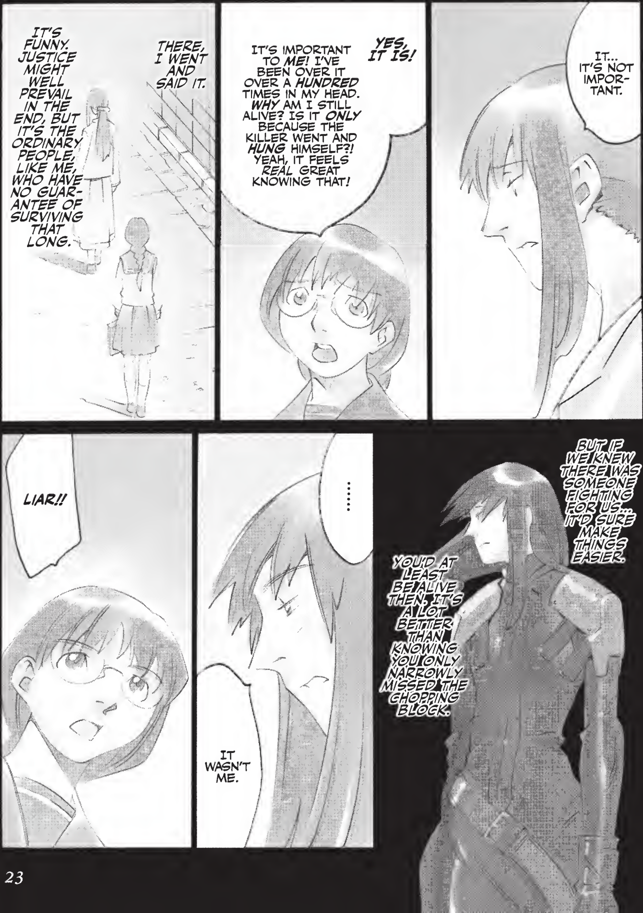

YOUR FOLKS PROBABLY GET *REALLY* WORRIED WHEN YOU COME HOME LATE, WHAT WITH WHAT HAPPENED *BEFORE* AND ALL.
JUST TELL 'EM YOU RAN INTO ME, AND SAID I COULD COME OVER SINCE MY PARENTS ARE OUT OF TOWN.
SHE WAS RIGHT, OF COURSE. IT WAS THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE EVERYTHING.
KIRIMA-SAN...
YOU'LL...
YOU'LL ACT *NORMALLY*, WON'T YOU?

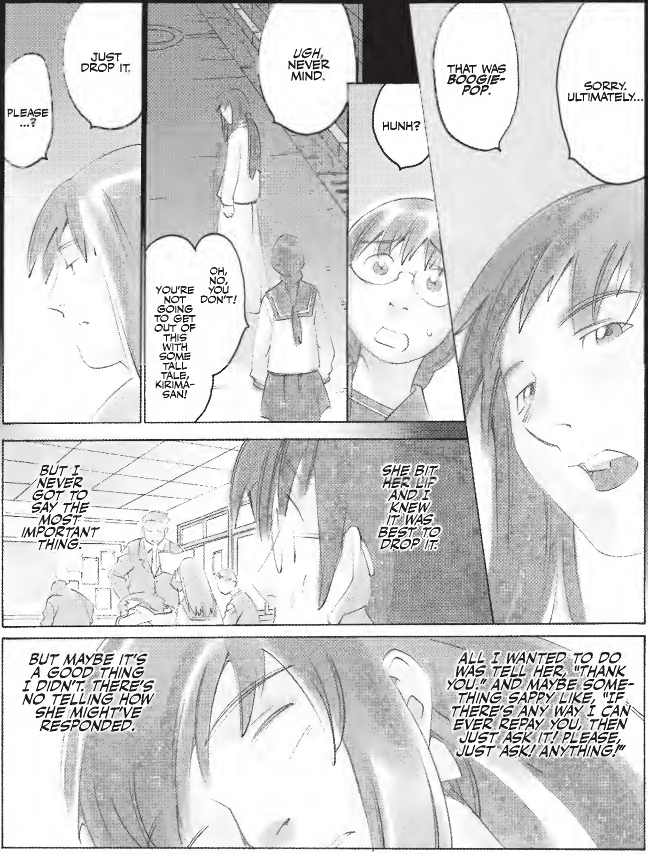

OF COURSE.
I'M NOT *DRESSED* LIKE A TROUBLE-MAKER, AM I?
WHEN I WANT, I CAN PRETEND TO BE A NORMAL GIRL.
ヘッ
GRIN
OKAY, NOW THAT'S ONE DUBIOUS LOOKING SMILE. STILL, SHE'S A PRETTY GIRL. IF SHE DIDN'T FORCE IT AS MUCH, IT WOULDN'T LOOK **NEARLY** AS CREEPY.
WELL, UH...
IN THAT CASE--
SO, YOU'RE PRETTY SMART, HUH?
I...I SUPPOSE.


HEARING HER ASK THAT WAS PRETTY WEIRD CONSIDERING SHE ACES ALL HER TESTS... WELL, THE MAKE-UP ONES, ANYWAY.
I KINDA THOUGHT SO. THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU ALL THAT STUFF.
OH, I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M GETTING AT. I MEAN ABOUT KIRIMA SEIICHI.
HM? WHAT ABOUT HIM?
YOU'VE READ HIS BOOKS, AND HERE I AM, HIS DAUGHTER, DOING ALL THIS *STUPID* SHIT.
TRUST ME...GET OUT *NOW* WHILE YOU STILL CAN.
WHY DO YOU *SAY* STUFF LIKE THAT?
WHY? BECAUSE THAT CRAP FIVE YEARS AGO IS *OVER* WITH. JUST LET IT GO.
IT'LL JUST COME BACK TO *HAUNT* YOU AND *WARP* YOUR PERSONALITY LIKE IT HAS *MINE*.
BUT *WHY?*

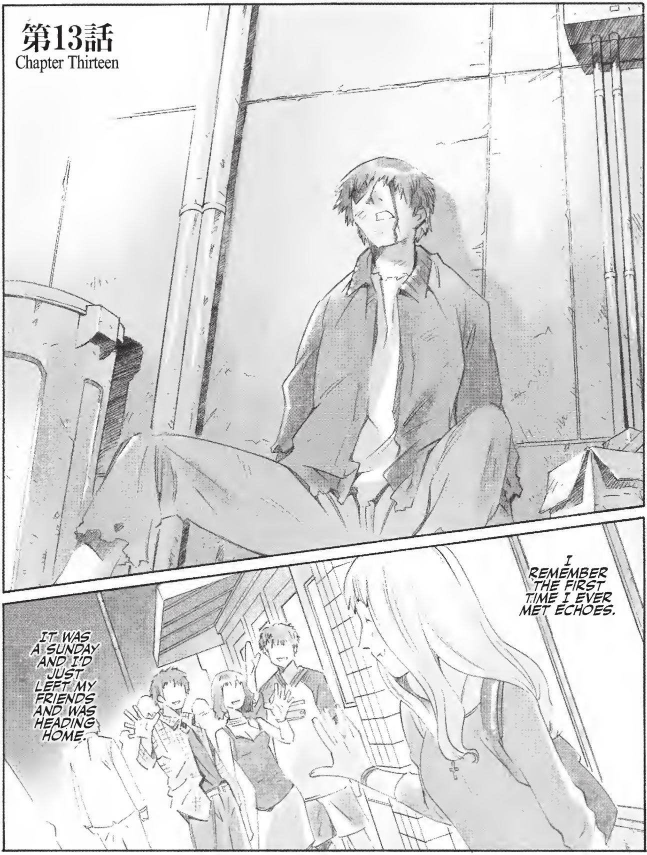

WHY...?
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO *END* UP LIKE ME?
ギロ
GLARE
SO, THIS IS THE GLARE OF THE FIRE WITCH.
NO... I CAN'T PULL BACK NOW. I'M NOT AFRAID.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT *STUFF* FIVE YEARS AGO?
I NEVER TOLD *ANYONE*.
UM, I...
THAT IS--
YOU *BARELY* SPEAK TO ANYONE IN CLASS! THERE'S *NO* WAY YOU COULD'VE FOUND OUT ABOUT DOCTOR MURDER!
THAT STUFF'S *NOT* PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE!!

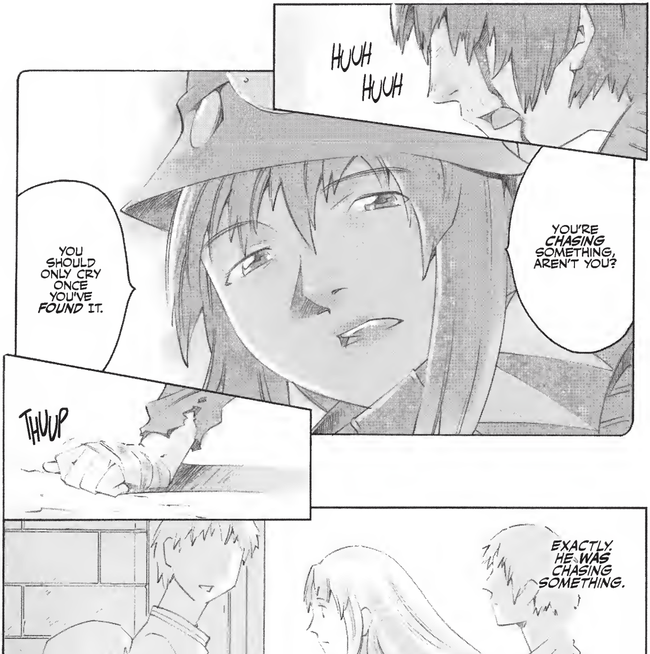

THE *ONLY* PEOPLE THAT KNOW ARE THE ONES THAT WERE--!
OH MY GOD...
IT WAS *YOU*. YOU SAVED ME.

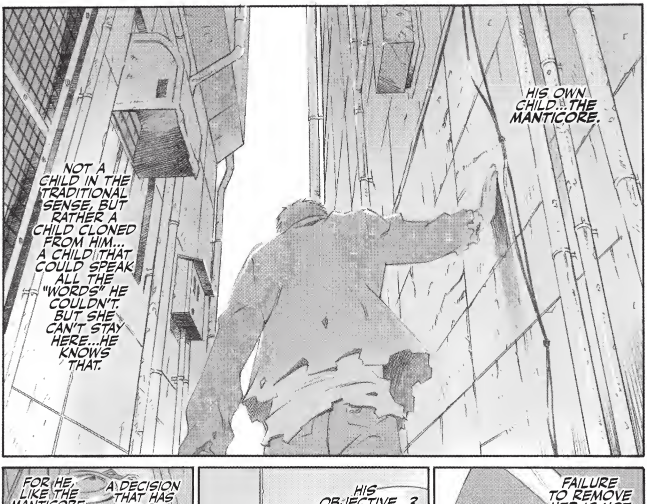

IT... IT'S NOT IMPORTANT.
YES, IT IS!
IT'S IMPORTANT TO *ME!* I'VE BEEN OVER IT OVER A *HUNDRED* TIMES IN MY HEAD. *WHY* AM I STILL ALIVE? IS IT *ONLY* BECAUSE THE KILLER WENT AND *HUNG* HIMSELF?! YEAH, IT FEELS *REAL* GREAT KNOWING THAT!
THERE, I WENT AND SAID IT.
IT'S FUNNY. JUSTICE MIGHT WELL PREVAIL IN THE END, BUT IT'S THE ORDINARY PEOPLE, LIKE ME, WHO HAVE NO GUARANTEE OF SURVIVING THAT LONG.
BUT IF WE KNEW THERE WAS SOMEONE FIGHTING FOR US... IT'D SURE MAKE THINGS EASIER.
YOU'D AT LEAST BE ALIVE THEN. IT'S A LOT BETTER THAN KNOWING YOU ONLY NARROWLY MISSED THE CHOPPING BLOCK.
......
IT WASN'T ME.
LIAR!!

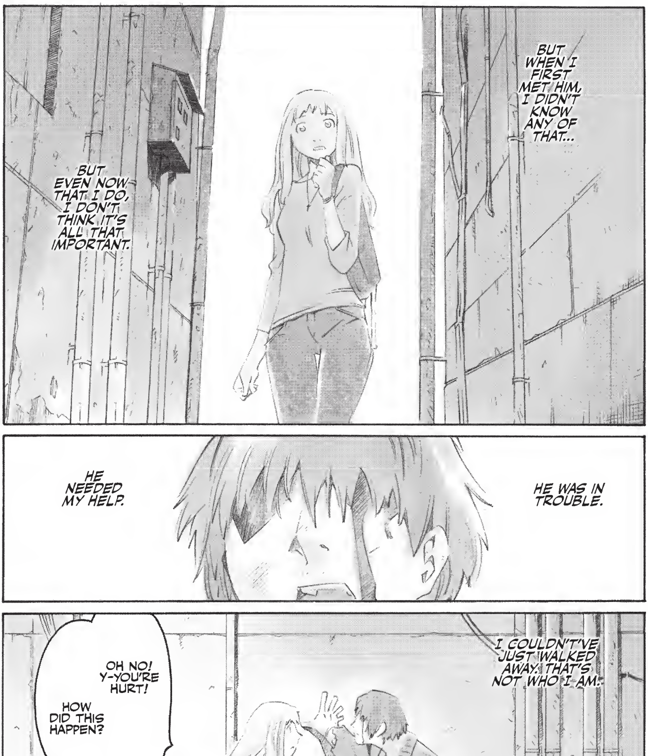

SORRY. ULTIMATELY...
THAT WAS BOOGIEPOP.
HUNH?
UGH, NEVER MIND.
OH, NO, YOU DON'T!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET OUT OF THIS WITH SOME TALL TALE, KIRIMA-SAN!
JUST DROP IT.
PLEASE ...?
SHE BIT HER LIP AND I KNEW IT WAS BEST TO DROP IT.
BUT I NEVER GOT TO SAY THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.
ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS TELL HER, "THANK YOU." AND MAYBE SOMETHING SAPPY LIKE, "IF THERE'S ANY WAY I CAN EVER REPAY YOU, THEN JUST ASK IT! PLEASE, JUST ASK! ANYTHING!"
BUT MAYBE IT'S A GOOD THING I DIDN'T. THERE'S NO TELLING HOW SHE MIGHT'VE RESPONDED.

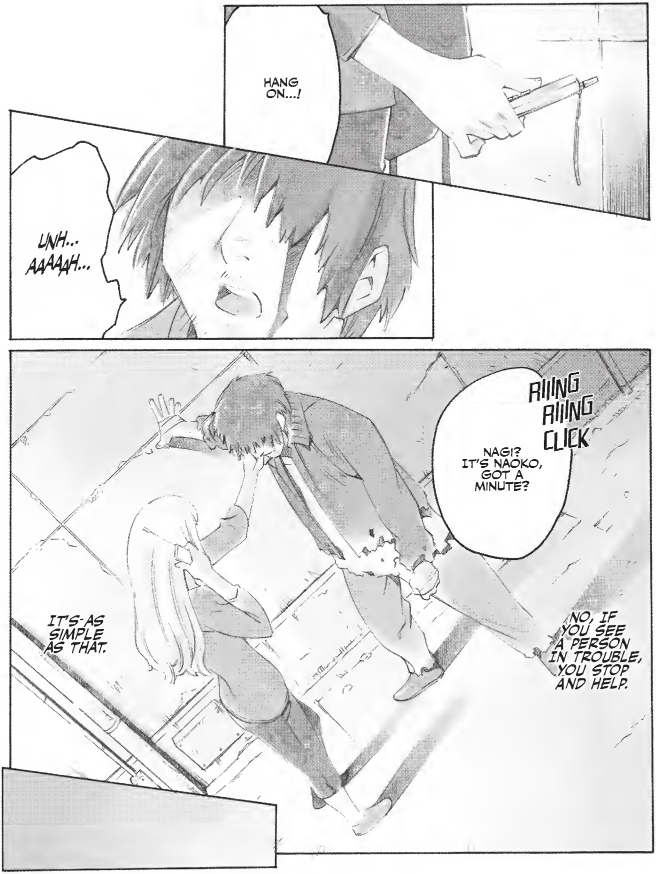
第13話
Chapter Thirteen

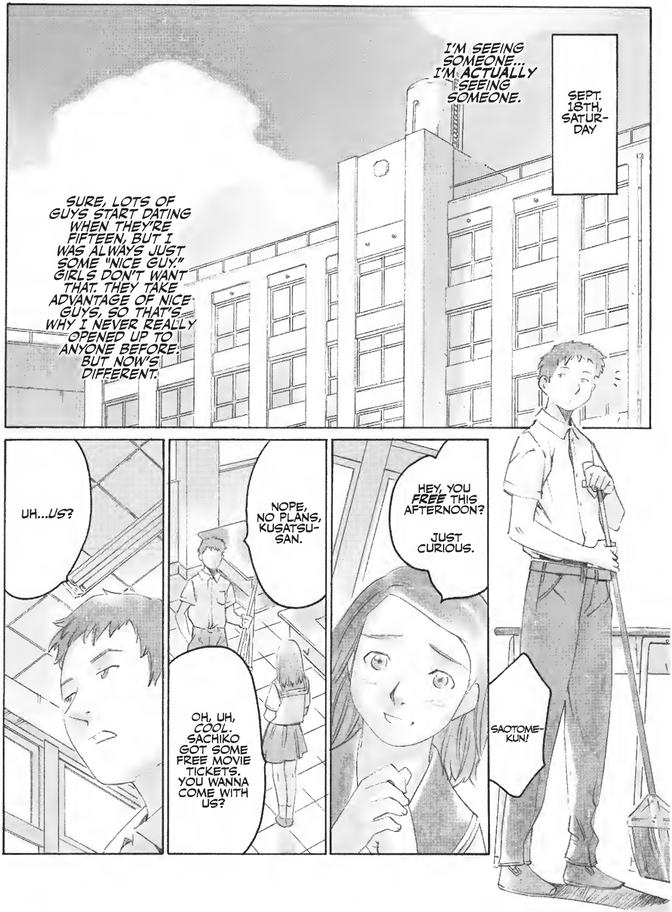

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I EVER MET ECHOES.
IT WAS A SUNDAY AND I'D JUST LEFT MY FRIENDS AND WAS HEADING HOME.

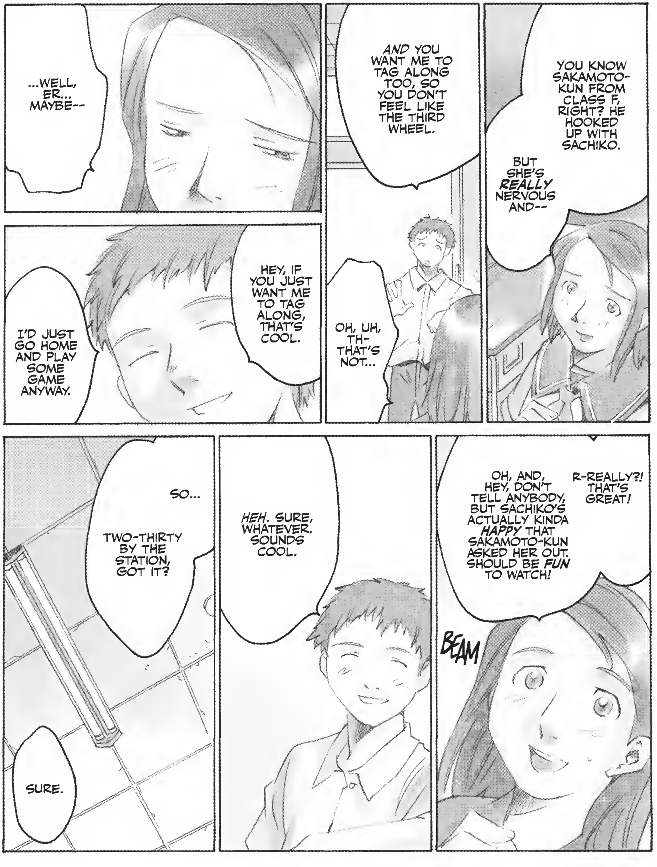

HUUH
HUUH
YOU'RE *CHASING* SOMETHING, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SHOULD ONLY CRY ONCE YOU'VE *FOUND* IT.
THUUP
EXACTLY. HE *WAS* CHASING SOMETHING.

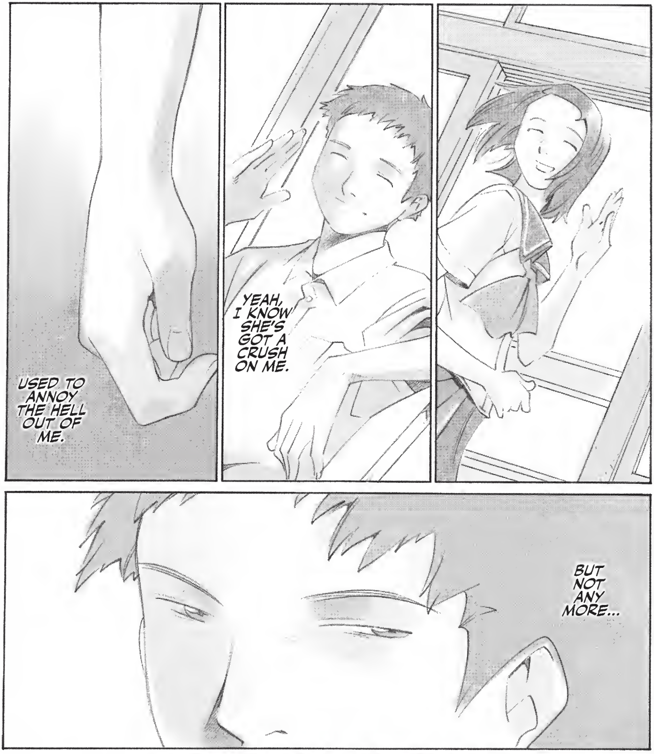

HIS OWN CHILD...THE MANTICORE.
NOT A CHILD IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, BUT RATHER A CHILD CLONED FROM HIM... A CHILD THAT COULD SPEAK ALL THE "WORDS" HE COULDN'T. BUT SHE CAN'T STAY HERE...HE KNOWS THAT.
FAILURE TO REMOVE HER IS NOT AN OPTION. ALL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION DEPENDS ON IT.
HE MUST NOT BE PREVENTED FROM CARRYING OUT HIS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE.
HIS OBJECTIVE...?
ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, HE HAS TO MAKE A DECISION...
A DECISION THAT HAS TO BE RIGOROUSLY BALANCED.
FOR HE, LIKE THE MANTICORE, WAS ALIEN TO THIS PLANET AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT EXIST HERE.
AHHH!

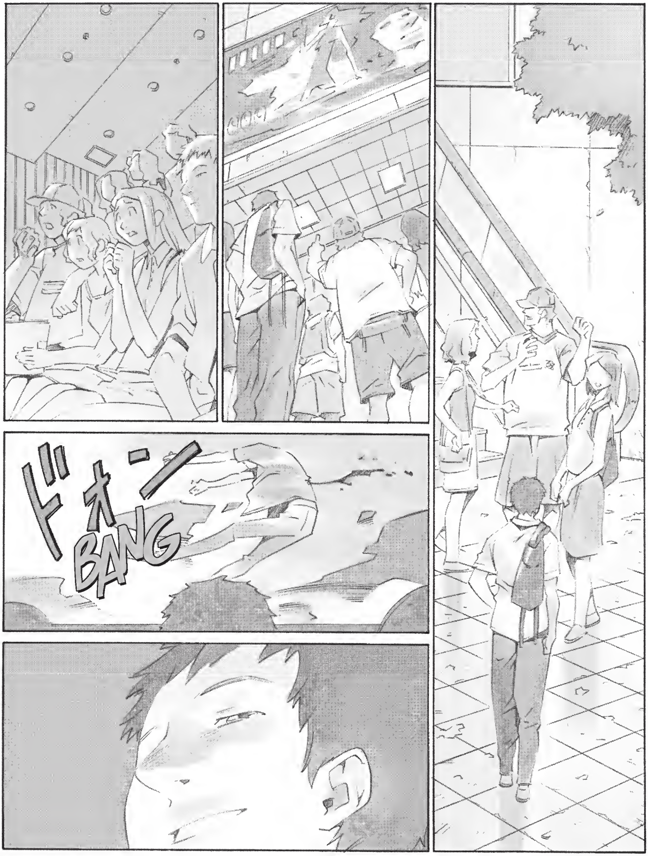

BUT WHEN I FIRST MET HIM, I DIDN'T KNOW ANY OF THAT...
BUT EVEN NOW THAT I DO, I DON'T THINK IT'S ALL THAT IMPORTANT.
HE WAS IN TROUBLE.
HE NEEDED MY HELP.
I COULDN'T'VE JUST WALKED AWAY. THAT'S NOT WHO I AM.
OH NO! Y-YOU'RE HURT! HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

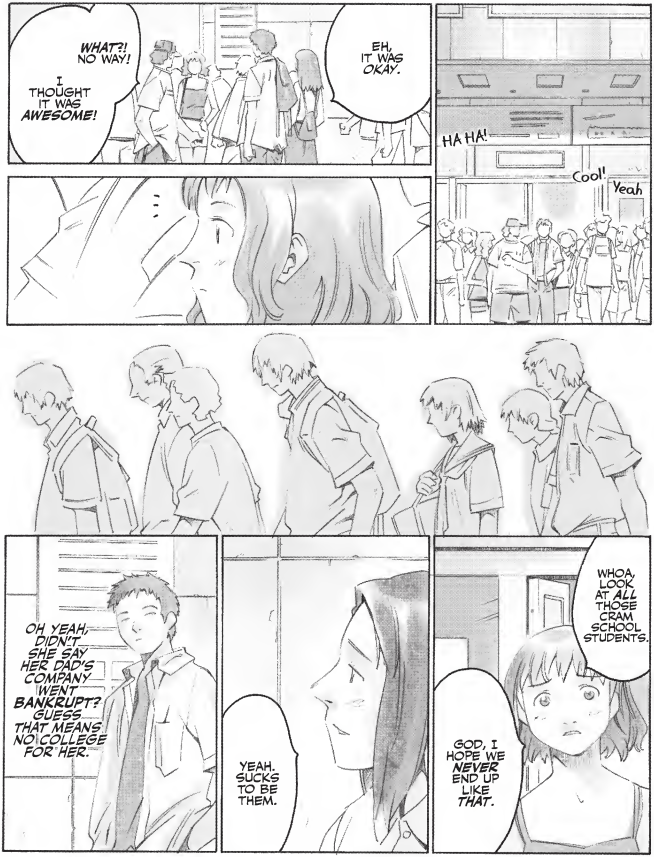

HANG ON...!
UNH... AAAAAH...
RIIING RIIING CLICK
NAGI? IT'S NAOKO, GOT A MINUTE?
NO, IF YOU SEE A PERSON IN TROUBLE, YOU STOP AND HELP.
IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

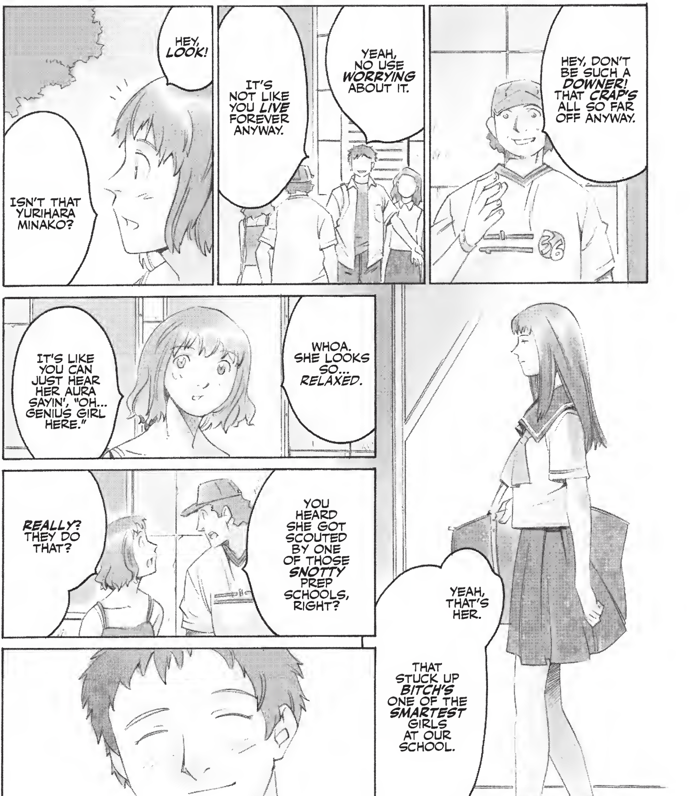

SEPT. 18TH, SATURDAY
I'M SEEING SOMEONE... I'M *ACTUALLY* SEEING SOMEONE.
SURE, LOTS OF GUYS START DATING WHEN THEY'RE FIFTEEN, BUT I WAS ALWAYS JUST SOME "NICE GUY." GIRLS DON'T WANT THAT. THEY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NICE GUYS, SO THAT'S WHY I NEVER REALLY OPENED UP TO ANYONE BEFORE. BUT NOW'S DIFFERENT.
SAOTOME-KUN!
HEY, YOU *FREE* THIS AFTERNOON?
JUST CURIOUS.
NOPE, NO PLANS, KUSATSU-SAN.
OH, UH, *COOL*. SACHIKO GOT SOME FREE MOVIE TICKETS. YOU WANNA COME WITH US?
UH...*US*?

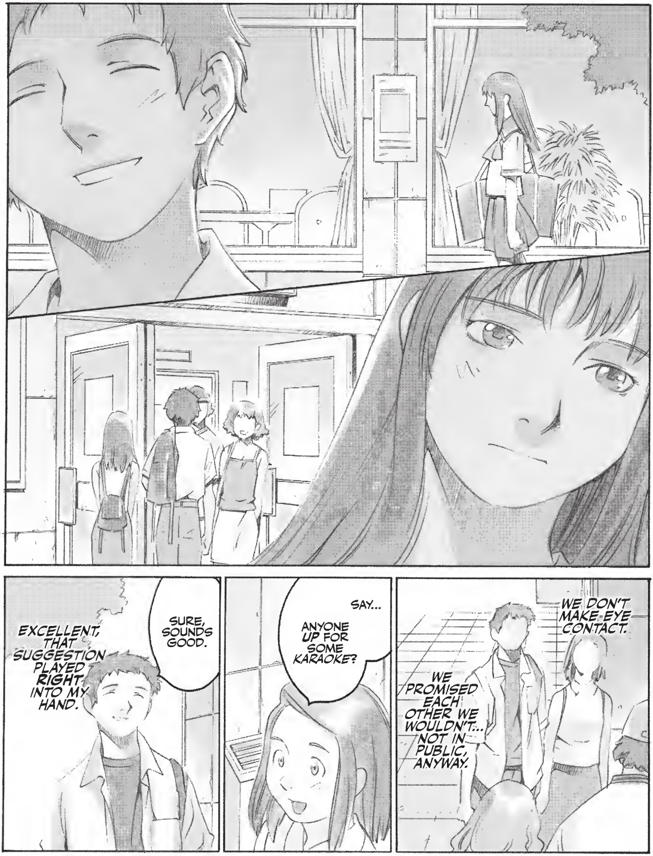

YOU KNOW SAKAMOTO-KUN FROM CLASS F, RIGHT? HE HOOKED UP WITH SACHIKO.
BUT SHE'S *REALLY* NERVOUS AND--
AND YOU WANT ME TO TAG ALONG TOO, SO YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE THE THIRD WHEEL.
OH, UH, TH-THAT'S NOT...
...WELL, ER... MAYBE--
HEY, IF YOU JUST WANT ME TO TAG ALONG, THAT'S COOL.
I'D JUST GO HOME AND PLAY SOME GAME ANYWAY.
R-REALLY?! THAT'S GREAT!
OH, AND, HEY, DON'T TELL ANYBODY, BUT SACHIKO'S ACTUALLY KINDA *HAPPY* THAT SAKAMOTO-KUN ASKED HER OUT. SHOULD BE *FUN* TO WATCH!
BEAM
HEH. SURE, WHATEVER. SOUNDS COOL.
SO...
TWO-THIRTY BY THE STATION, GOT IT?
SURE.

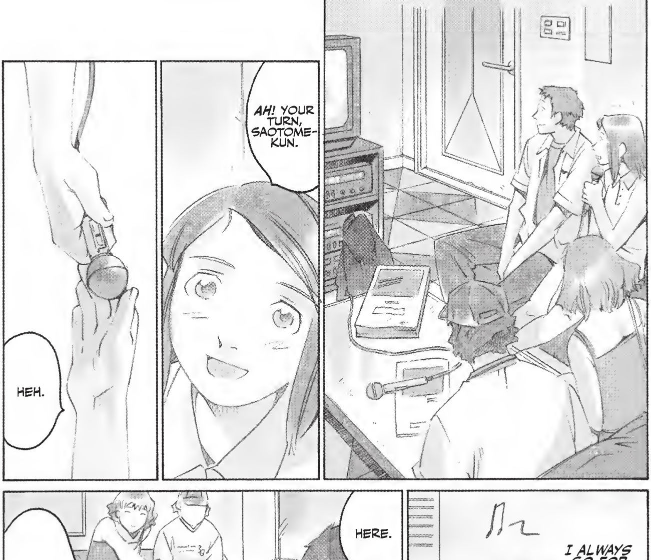

YEAH, I KNOW SHE'S GOT A CRUSH ON ME.
USED TO ANNOY THE HELL OUT OF ME.
BUT NOT ANY MORE...

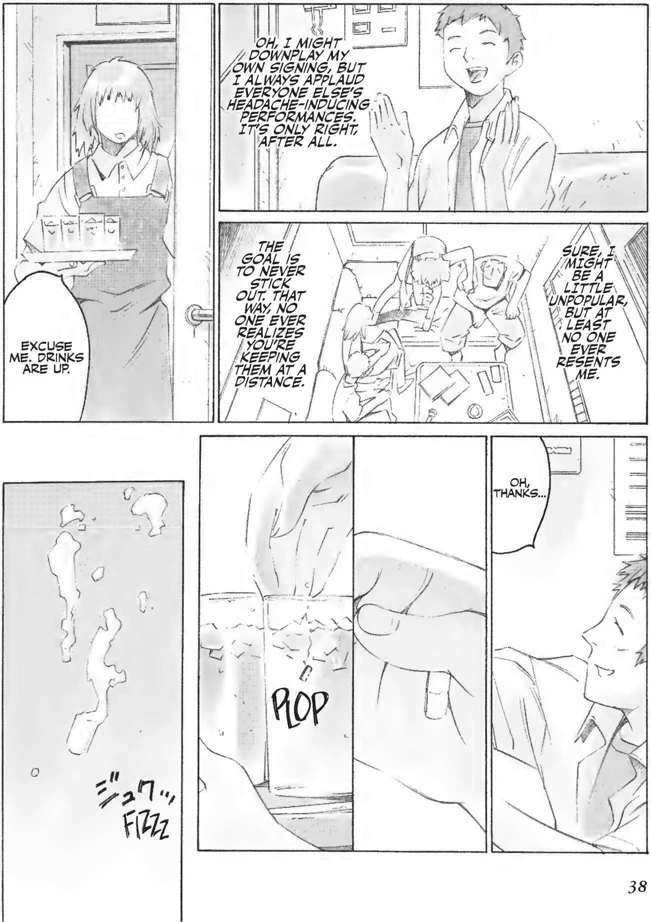

ドォーン
BANG

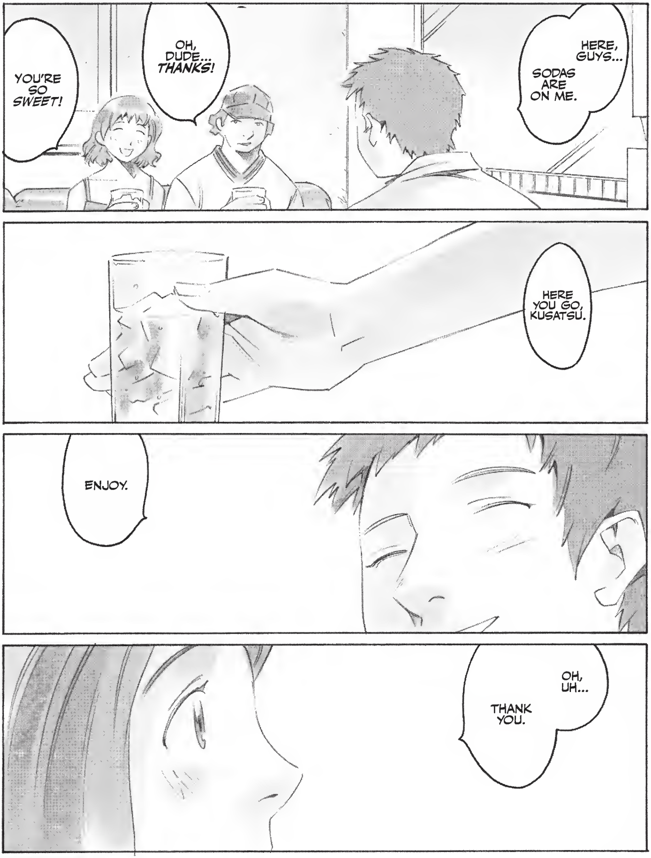

HA HA!
Cool!
Yeah
EH, IT WAS *OKAY.*
WHAT?! NO WAY! I THOUGHT IT WAS ***AWESOME!***
...
WHOA, LOOK AT ***ALL*** THOSE CRAM SCHOOL STUDENTS.
GOD, I HOPE WE ***NEVER*** END UP LIKE ***THAT.***
YEAH. SUCKS TO BE THEM.
OH YEAH, DIDN'T SHE SAY HER DAD'S COMPANY WENT ***BANKRUPT?*** *GUESS THAT MEANS NO COLLEGE FOR HER.*

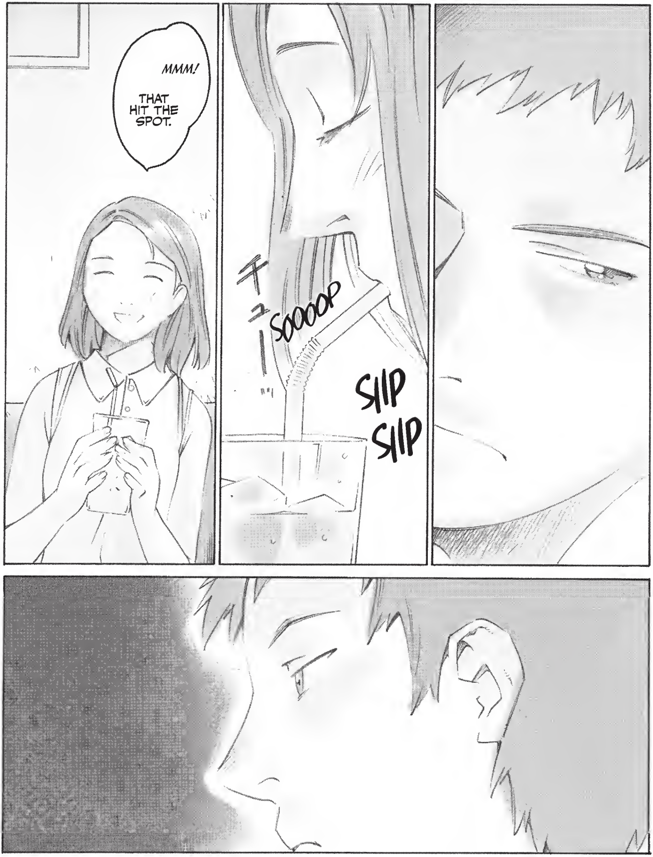

HEY, DON'T BE SUCH A *DOWNER!* THAT *CRAP'S* ALL SO FAR OFF ANYWAY.
YEAH, NO USE *WORRYING* ABOUT IT.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU *LIVE* FOREVER ANYWAY.
HEY, *LOOK!*
ISN'T THAT YURIHARA MINAKO?
WHOA. SHE LOOKS SO... *RELAXED.*
IT'S LIKE YOU CAN JUST HEAR HER AURA SAYIN', "OH... GENIUS GIRL HERE."
YOU HEARD SHE GOT SCOUTED BY ONE OF THOSE *SNOTTY* PREP SCHOOLS, RIGHT?
REALLY? THEY DO THAT?
YEAH, THAT'S HER.
THAT STUCK UP *BITCH'S* ONE OF THE *SMARTEST* GIRLS AT OUR SCHOOL.

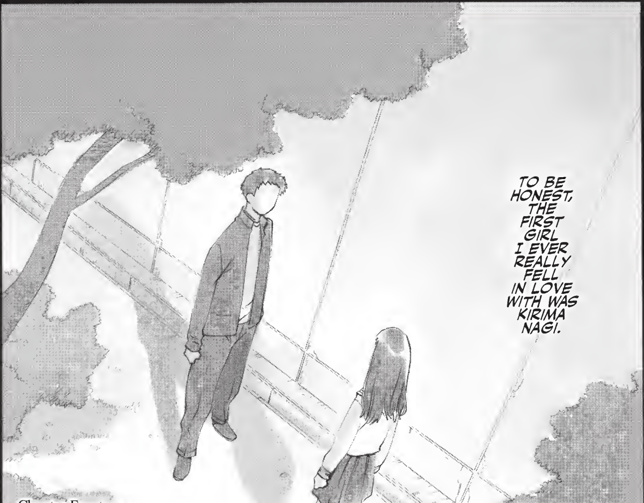

WE DON'T MAKE EYE CONTACT.
WE PROMISED EACH OTHER WE WOULDN'T... NOT IN PUBLIC, ANYWAY.
SAY...
ANYONE UP FOR SOME KARAOKE?
SURE, SOUNDS GOOD.
EXCELLENT, THAT SUGGESTION PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY HAND.


AH! YOUR TURN, SAOTOME-KUN.
HEH.
♪
I ALWAYS GO FOR THE EASY POP SONGS THAT EVERYONE'S ALREADY SICK OF.
IT'S A GREAT STRATEGY. IT KEEPS EVERYONE FROM GETTING ALL WORKED UP.
HERE.
THANKS.
♪ Youは Shock!
♪


OH, I MIGHT DOWNPLAY MY OWN SIGNING, BUT I ALWAYS APPLAUD EVERYONE ELSE'S HEADACHE-INDUCING PERFORMANCES. IT'S ONLY RIGHT, AFTER ALL.
SURE, I MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNPOPULAR, BUT AT LEAST NO ONE EVER RESENTS ME.
THE GOAL IS TO NEVER STICK OUT. THAT WAY, NO ONE EVER REALIZES YOU'RE KEEPING THEM AT A DISTANCE.
EXCUSE ME. DRINKS ARE UP.
OH, THANKS...
PLOP
ジュワッ
FIZZZ

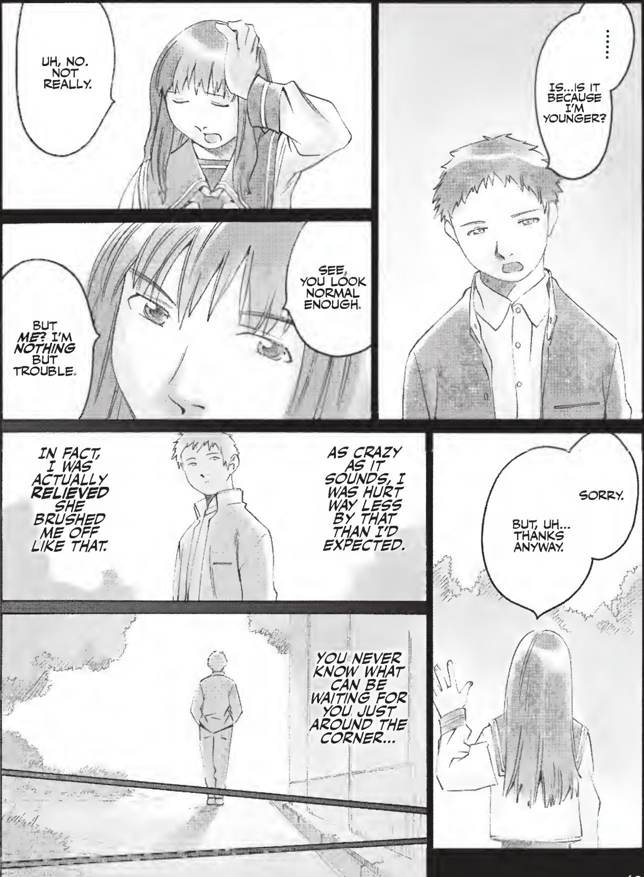

HERE, GUYS... SODAS ARE ON ME.
OH, DUDE... *THANKS!*
YOU'RE SO *SWEET!*
HERE YOU GO, KUSATSU.
ENJOY.
OH, UH... THANK YOU.

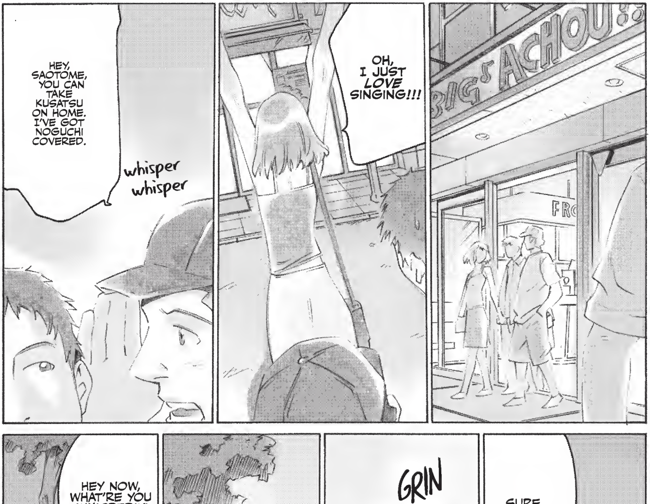

チュー
SOOOOP
SLIP SLIP
MMM!
THAT HIT THE SPOT.

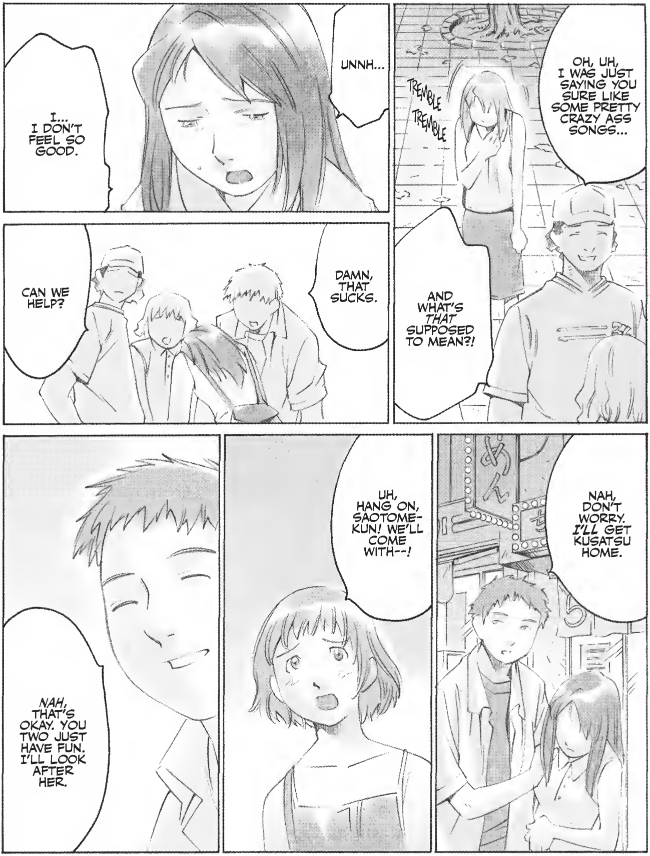


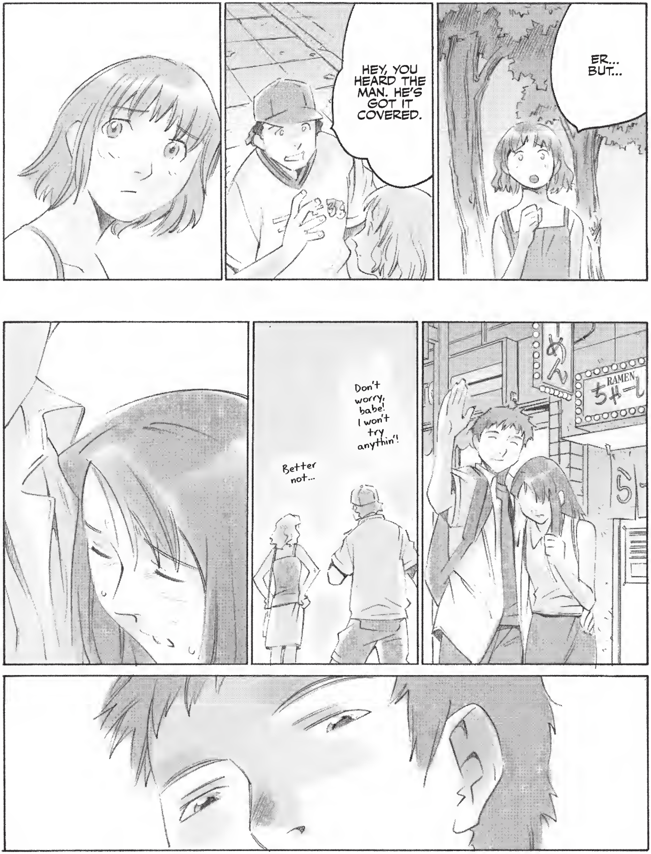
Chapter Fourteen
第14話

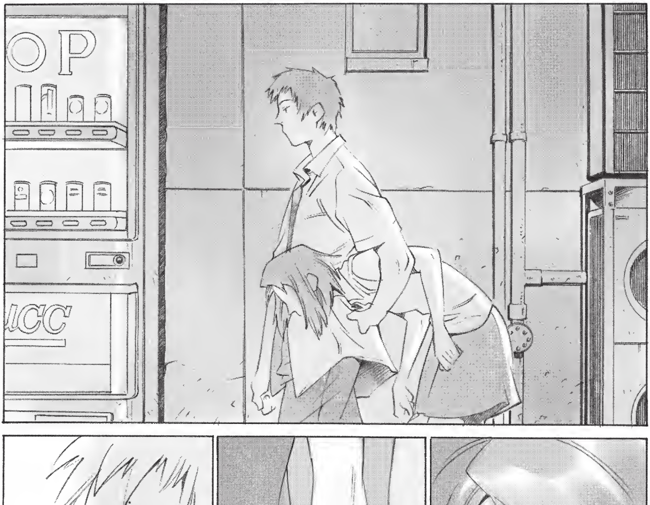
TO BE HONEST, THE FIRST GIRL I EVER REALLY FELL IN LOVE WITH WAS KIRIMA NAGI.
SORRY, KID, I... I DON'T HAVE THE TIME.
I ASKED HER OUT LAST MAY, AND SHE REJECTED ME ON THE SPOT.

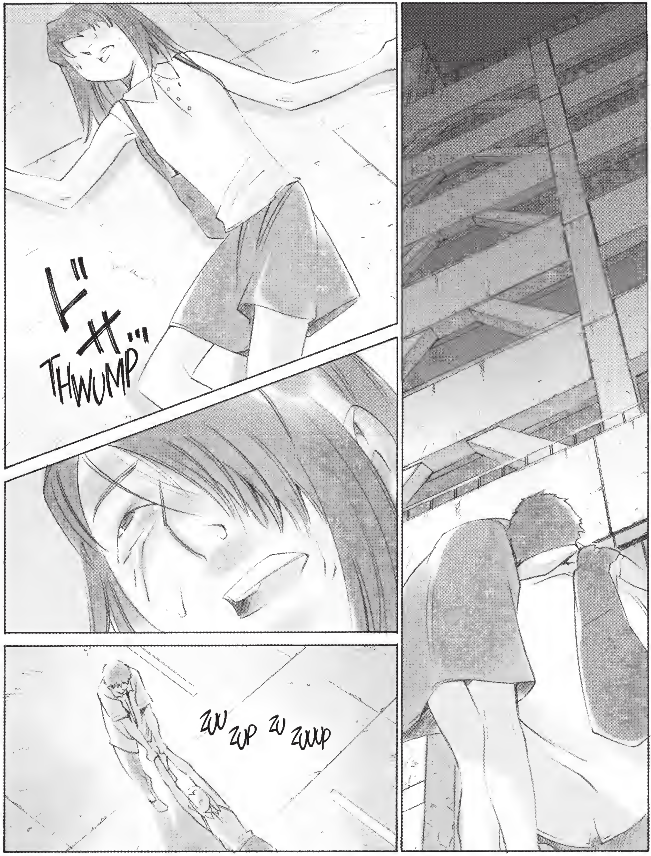

......
IS...IS IT BECAUSE I'M YOUNGER?
UH, NO. NOT REALLY.
SEE, YOU LOOK NORMAL ENOUGH.
BUT *ME?* I'M *NOTHING* BUT TROUBLE.
SORRY.
BUT, UH... THANKS ANYWAY.
AS CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS, I WAS HURT WAY LESS BY THAT THAN I'D EXPECTED.
IN FACT, I WAS ACTUALLY ***RELIEVED*** *SHE BRUSHED ME OFF LIKE THAT.*
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT CAN BE WAITING FOR YOU JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

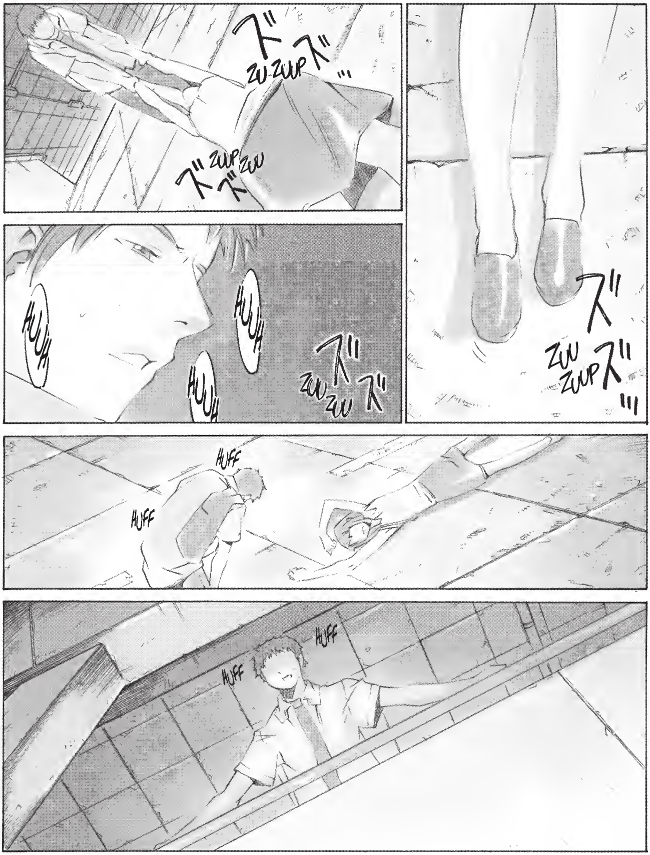

HEY, SAOTOME, YOU CAN TAKE KUSATSU ON HOME. I'VE GOT NOGUCHI COVERED.
whisper whisper
OH, I JUST *LOVE* SINGING!!!
BIG's ACHOU!
FRO
HEY NOW, WHAT'RE YOU *WHISPERIN'* ABOUT?!
...
GRIN
SURE, MAN. GOOD LUCK.

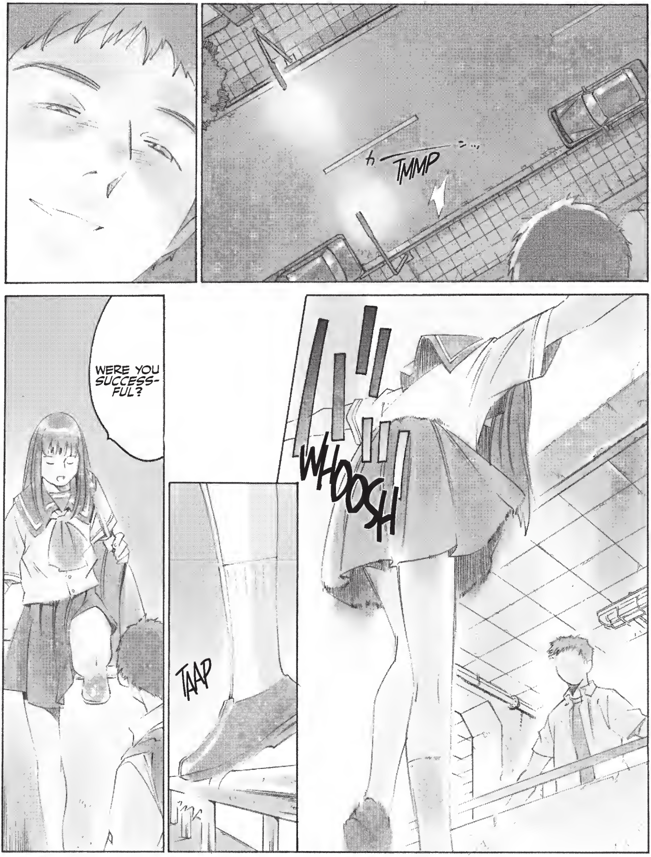

OH, UH, I WAS JUST SAYING YOU SURE LIKE SOME PRETTY CRAZY ASS SONGS...
TREMBLE TREMBLE
AND WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
UNNH...
I... I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.
DAMN, THAT SUCKS.
CAN WE HELP?
NAH, DON'T WORRY. *I'LL* GET KUSATSU HOME.
UH, HANG ON, SAOTOME-KUN! WE'LL COME WITH--!
NAH, THAT'S OKAY. YOU TWO JUST HAVE FUN. I'LL LOOK AFTER HER.

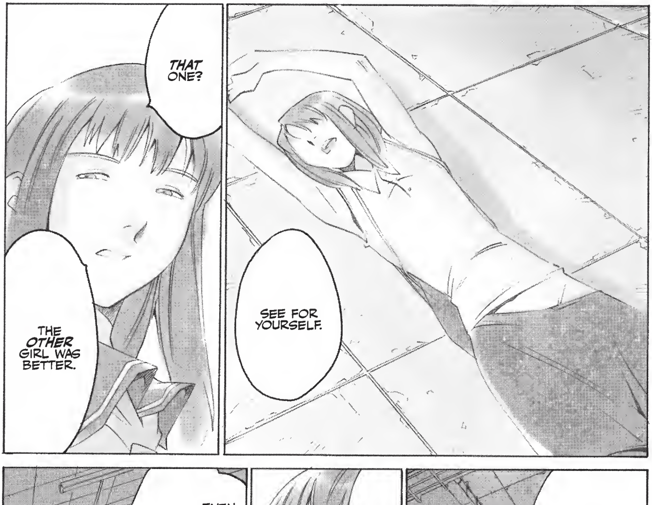

ER... BUT...
HEY, YOU HEARD THE MAN. HE'S GOT IT COVERED.
めん
RAMEN
ちゃーし
ら
Don't worry, babe! I won't try anythin'!
Better not...

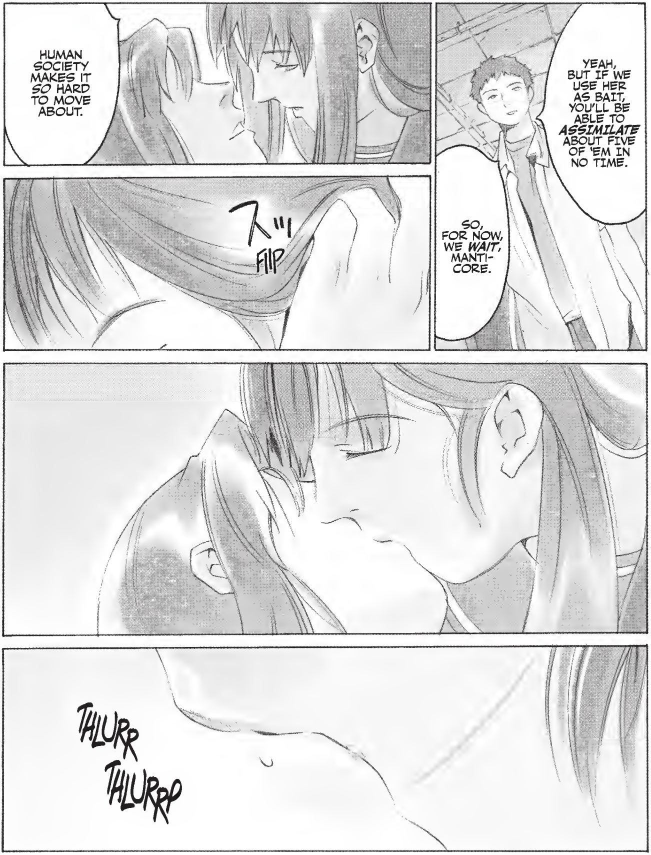

OP
UCC
I-I'M SORRY, SAOTOME-KUN...
SWAY
SWAY
CLOP
CLOP

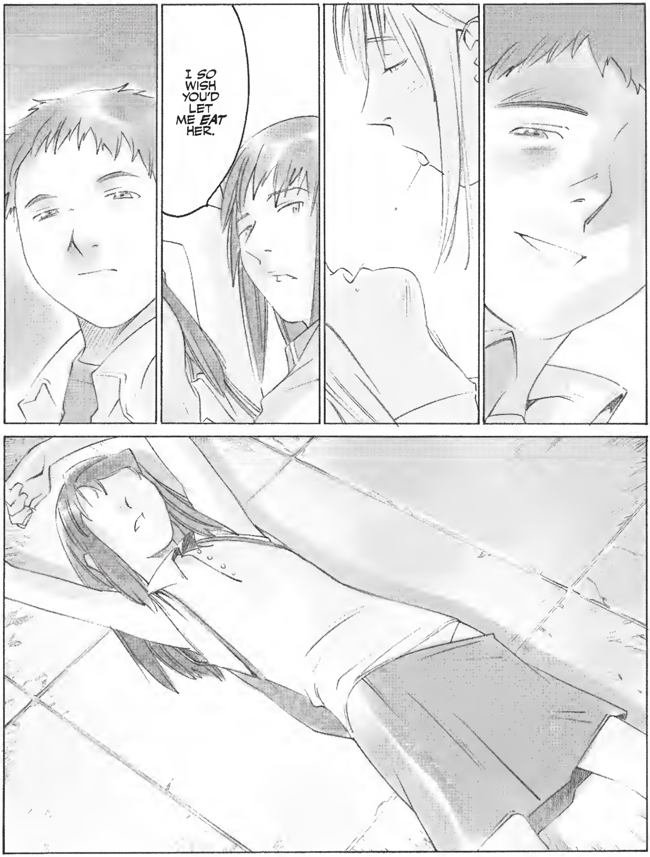

ドッ…
THWUMP
ZUU ZUP ZU ZUUUP

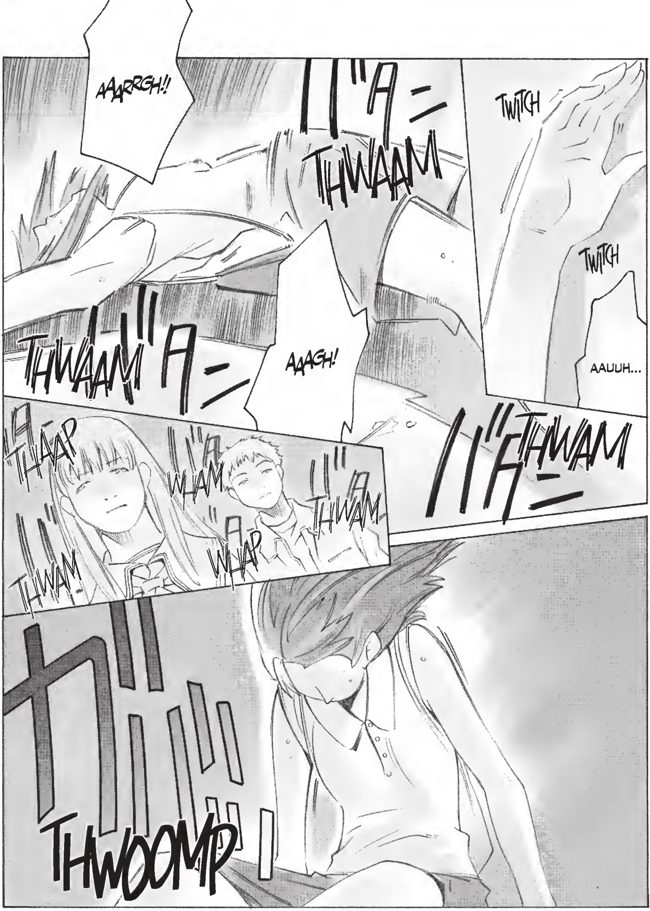

ズ
ZUU ZUUP ズ
ズ
ZU-ZUUP ズ
ズ ZUUP ズ ZUU
HUUH
HUUH
HUUH
ズ
ZUU ZUU ズ
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

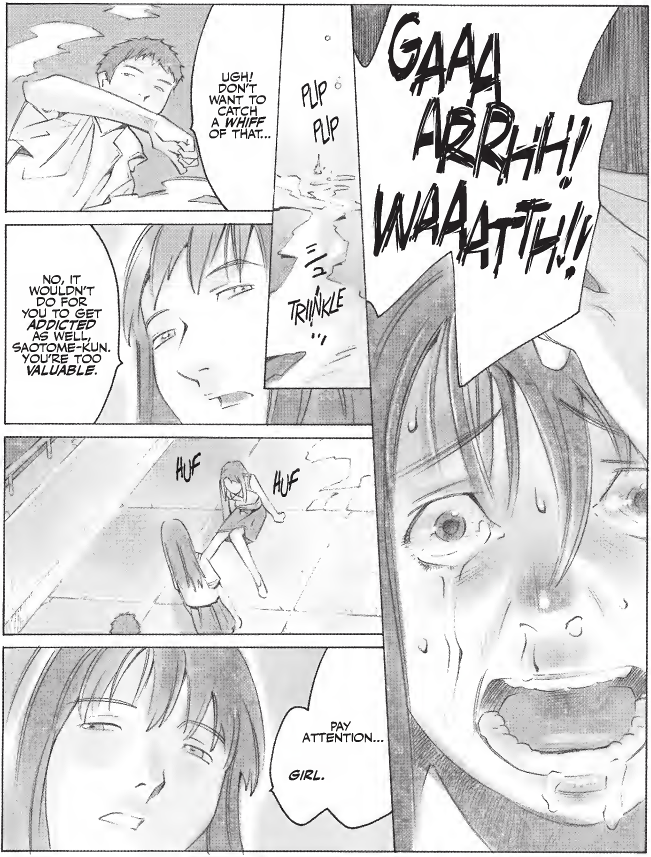

TMMP
WHOOSH
TAAP
WERE YOU SUCCESSFUL?

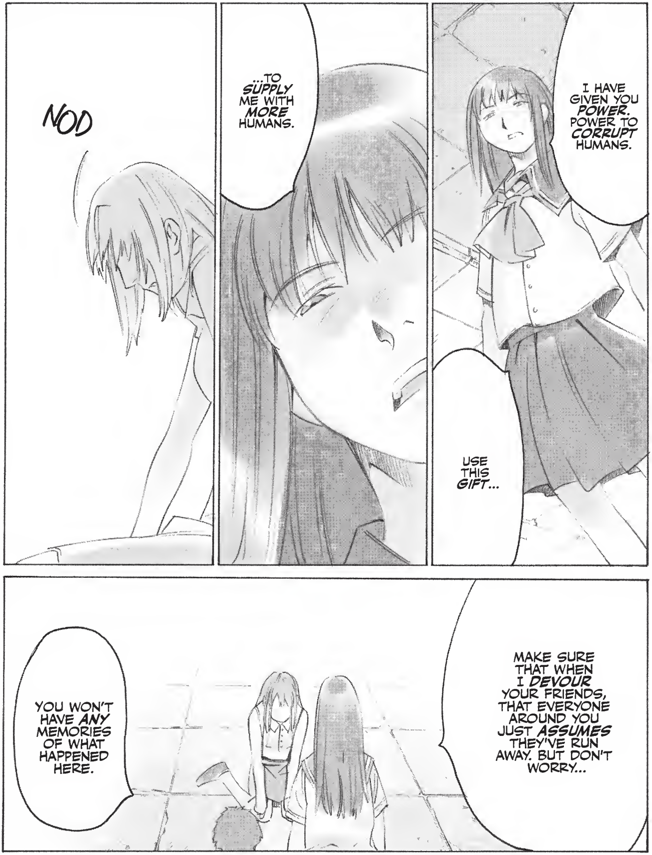

THAT ONE?
THE *OTHER* GIRL WAS BETTER.
SEE FOR YOURSELF.
EVEN SO...
IT SEEMS LIKE A *WASTE* NOT TO EAT HER *NOW*.
DOES SHE NOW?
FINE THEN. I'LL *TRUST* YOUR JUDGMENT, SAOTOME-KUN.
NOT REALLY. THIS GIRL HAS *MORE* FRIENDS THAN YOU'D THINK.

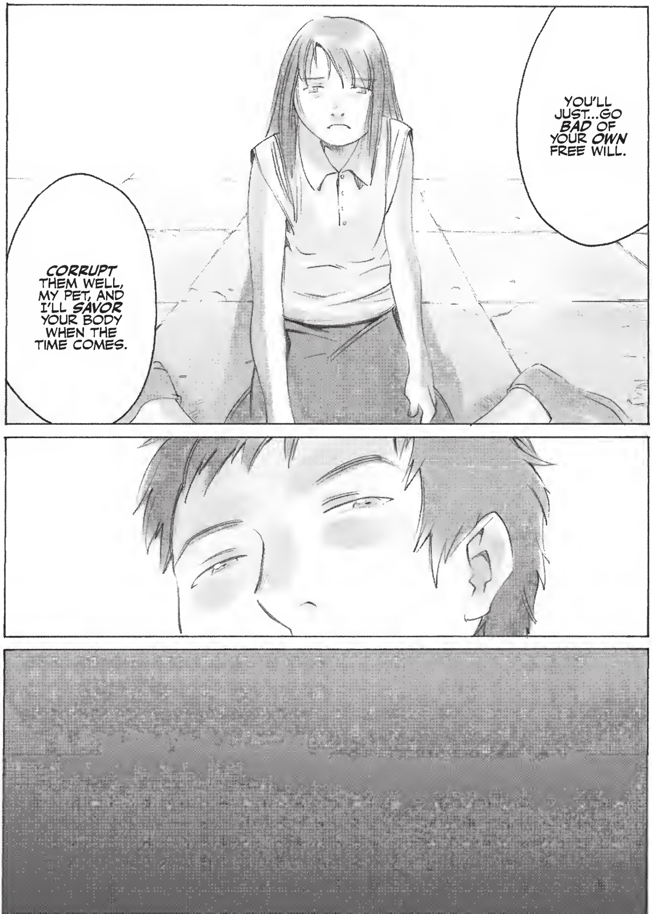

YEAH, BUT IF WE USE HER AS BAIT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ASSIMILATE ABOUT FIVE OF 'EM IN NO TIME.
SO, FOR NOW, WE WAIT, MANTICORE.
HUMAN SOCIETY MAKES IT SO HARD TO MOVE ABOUT.
スッ
FLIP
THLURR
THLURRP


I *SO* WISH YOU'D LET ME ***EAT*** HER.

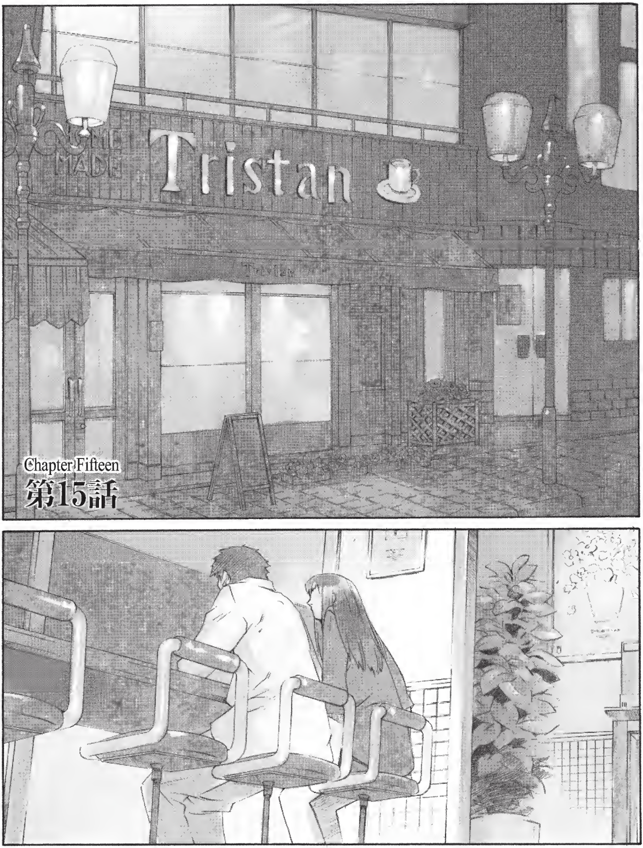

TWITCH
TWITCH
AAUUH...
AAARRGH!!
THWAAM
THWAAM
AAAGH!
THWAM
THAAP
WHAM
THWAM
WHAP
THWAM
THWOOMP

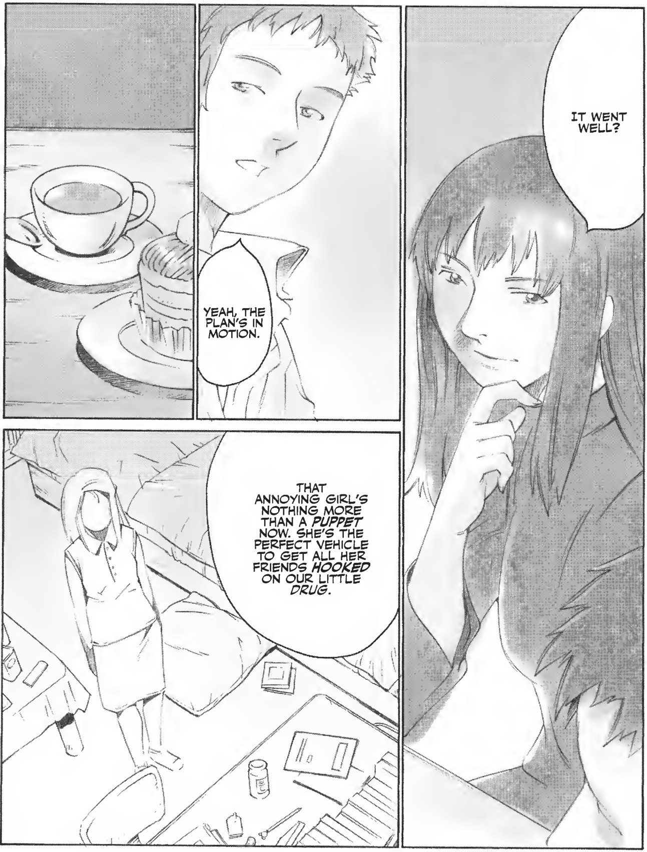

GAAA ARRHH! WAAATTH!!
PLIP PLIP
TRIINKLE
UGH! DON'T WANT TO CATCH A *WHIFF* OF THAT...
NO, IT WOULDN'T DO FOR YOU TO GET *ADDICTED* AS WELL, SAOTOME-KUN. YOU'RE TOO *VALUABLE*.
HUF HUF
PAY ATTENTION...
GIRL.

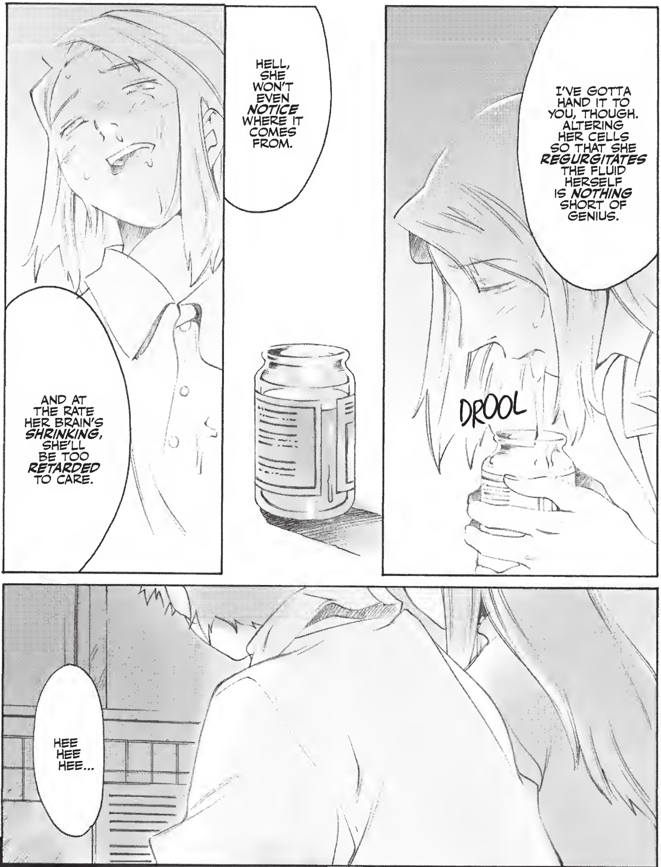

I HAVE GIVEN YOU *POWER.* POWER TO *CORRUPT* HUMANS.
USE THIS *GIFT*...
...TO *SUPPLY* ME WITH *MORE* HUMANS.
NOD
MAKE SURE THAT WHEN I *DEVOUR* YOUR FRIENDS, THAT EVERYONE AROUND YOU JUST *ASSUMES* THEY'VE RUN AWAY. BUT DON'T WORRY...
YOU WON'T HAVE *ANY* MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

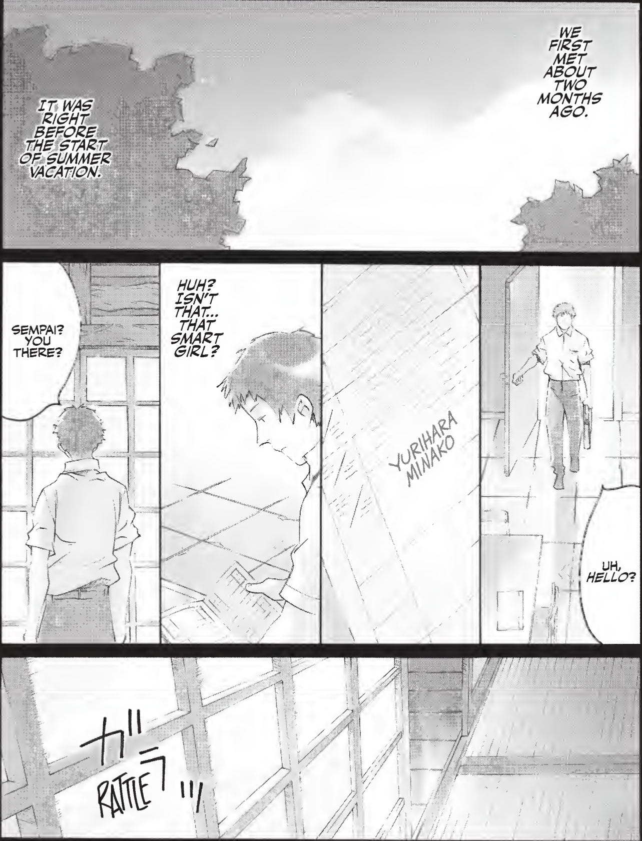

YOU'LL JUST...GO BAD OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL.
CORRUPT THEM WELL, MY PET, AND I'LL SAVOR YOUR BODY WHEN THE TIME COMES.

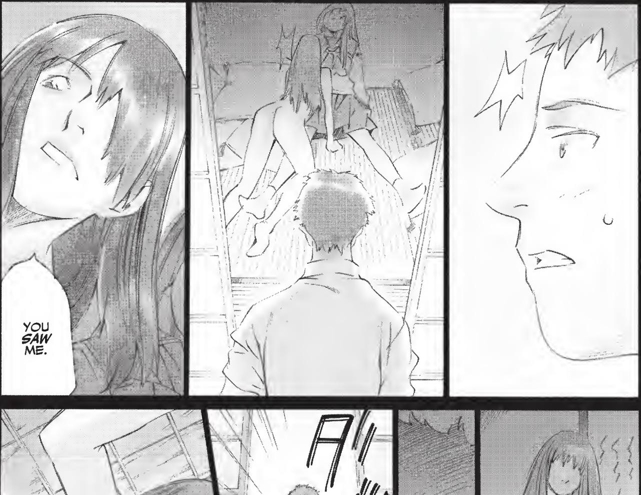
Chapter Fifteen
第15話

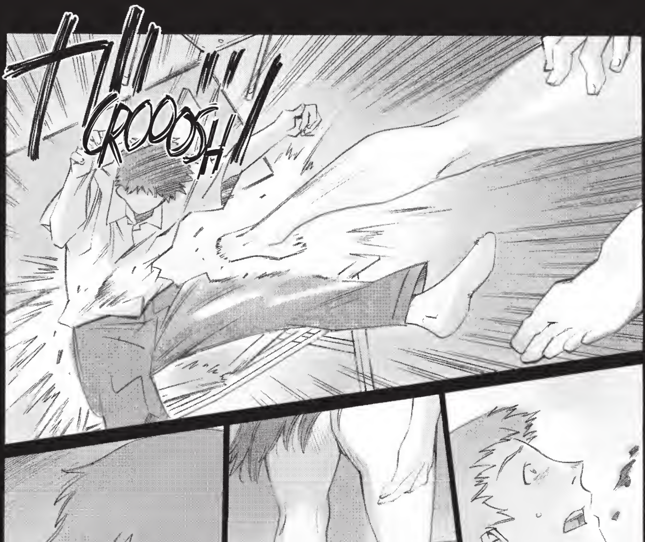

THE
MADE
Tristan
Tristan

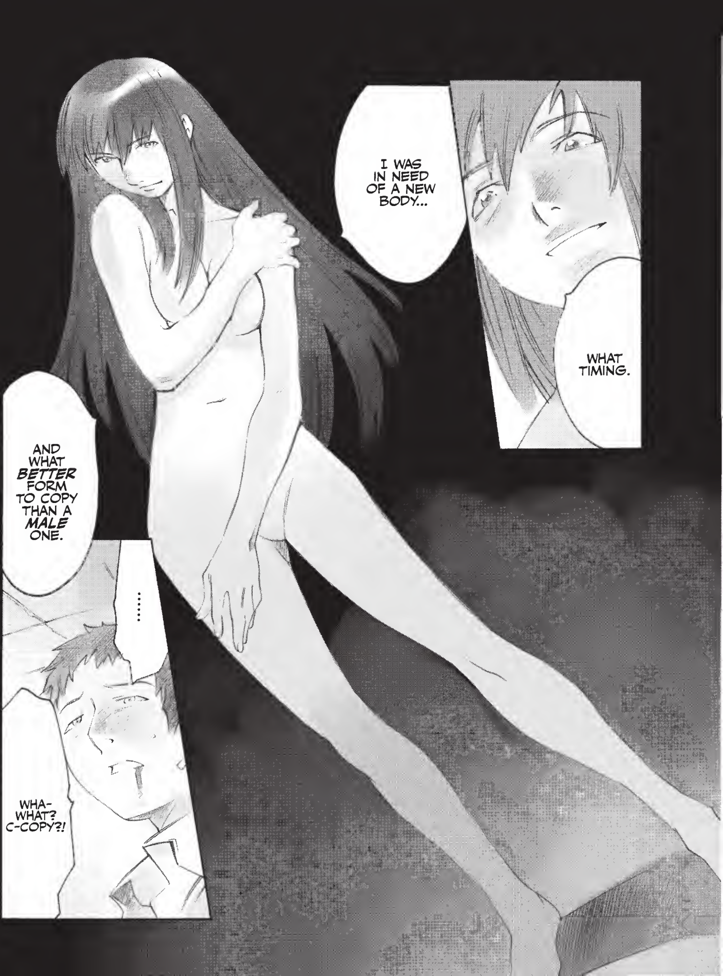

IT WENT WELL?
YEAH, THE PLAN'S IN MOTION.
THAT ANNOYING GIRL'S NOTHING MORE THAN A *PUPPET* NOW. SHE'S THE PERFECT VEHICLE TO GET ALL HER FRIENDS *HOOKED* ON OUR LITTLE *DRUG*.

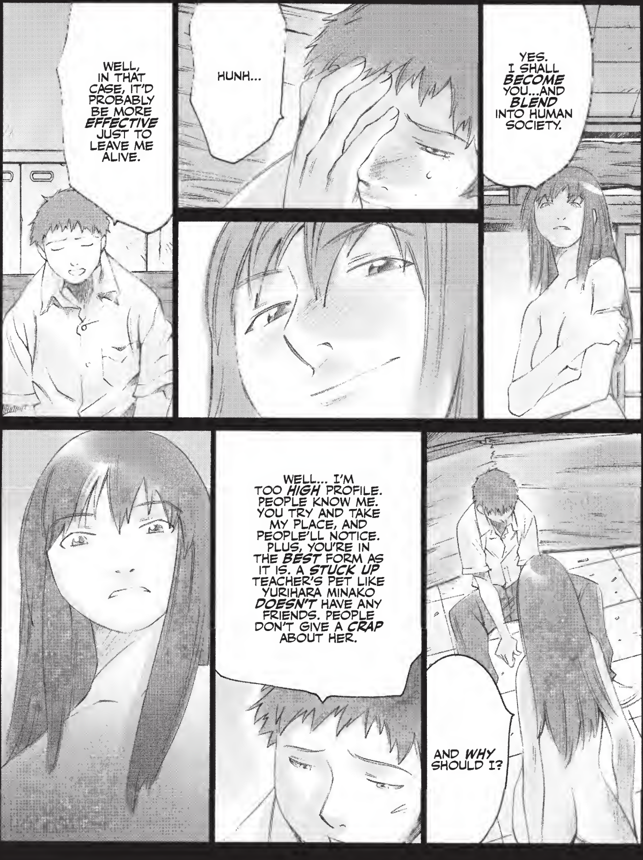

HELL, SHE WON'T EVEN *NOTICE* WHERE IT COMES FROM.
AND AT THE RATE HER BRAIN'S *SHRINKING*, SHE'LL BE TOO *RETARDED* TO CARE.
I'VE GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, THOUGH. ALTERING HER CELLS SO THAT SHE *REGURGITATES* THE FLUID HERSELF IS *NOTHING* SHORT OF GENIUS.
DROOL
HEE HEE HEE...

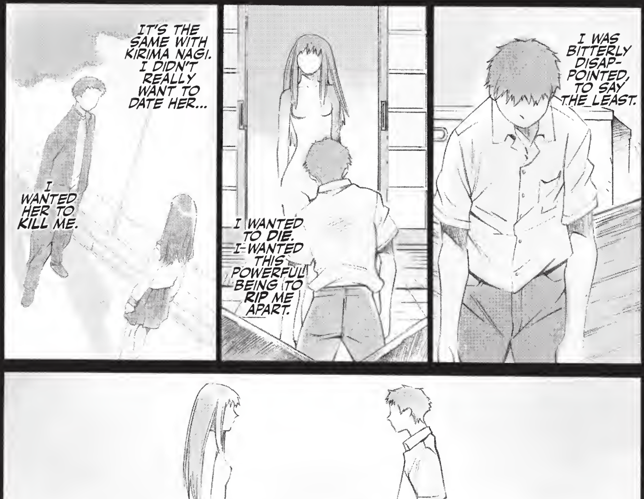

WE FIRST MET ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO.
IT WAS RIGHT BEFORE THE START OF SUMMER VACATION.
UH, HELLO?
YURIHARA MINAKO
HUH? ISN'T THAT... THAT SMART GIRL?
SEMPAI? YOU THERE?
ガラッ
RATTLE

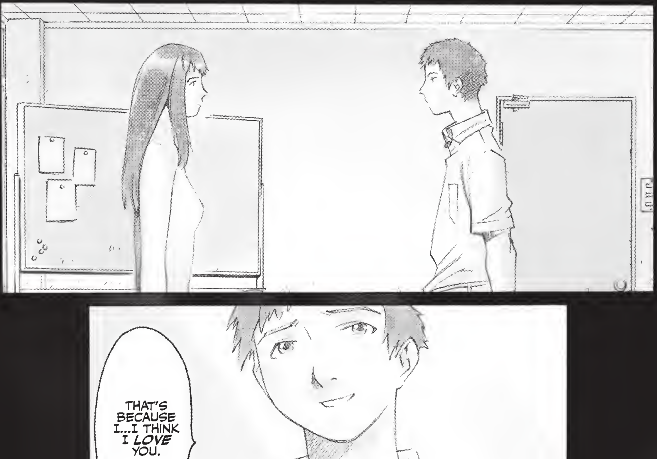

YOU *SAW* ME.
ONCE YOU'VE SEEN ME...YOU *CAN'T* BE ALLOWED TO LIVE.
HISS

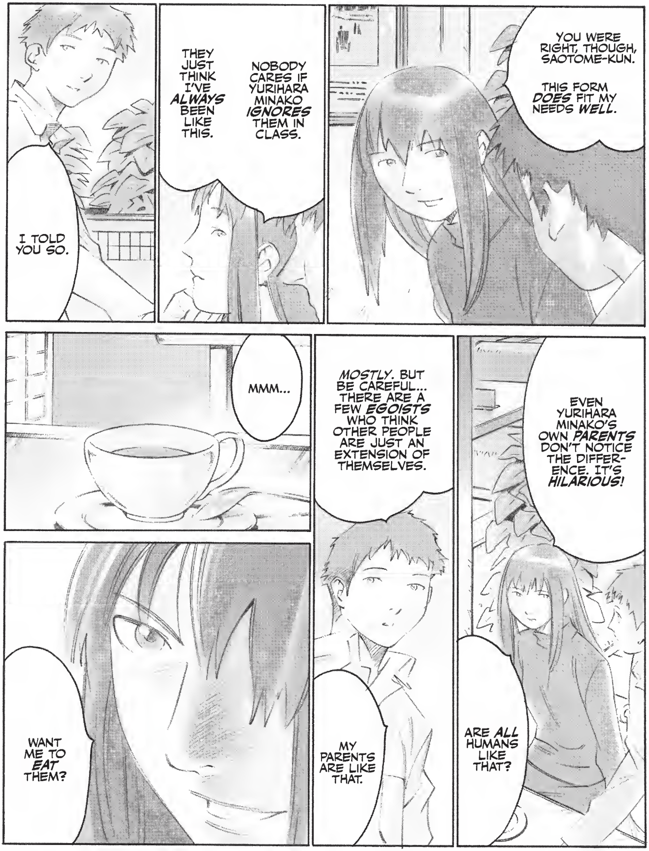

CROOOSH
TAP

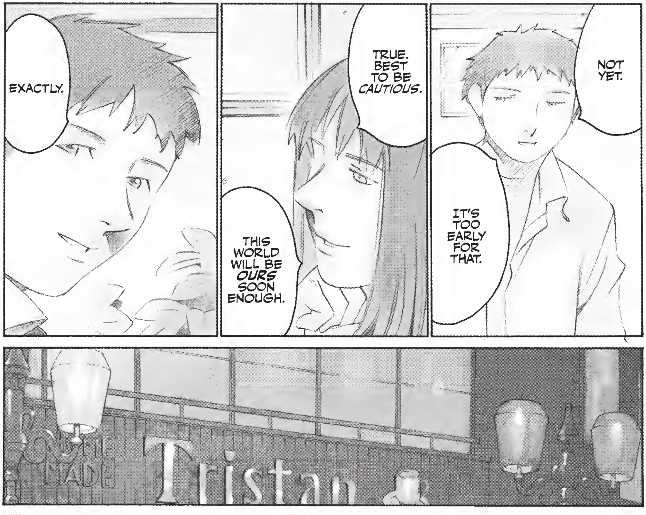

I WAS IN NEED OF A NEW BODY...
WHAT TIMING.
AND WHAT *BETTER* FORM TO COPY THAN A *MALE* ONE.
......
WHA-WHAT? C-COPY?!

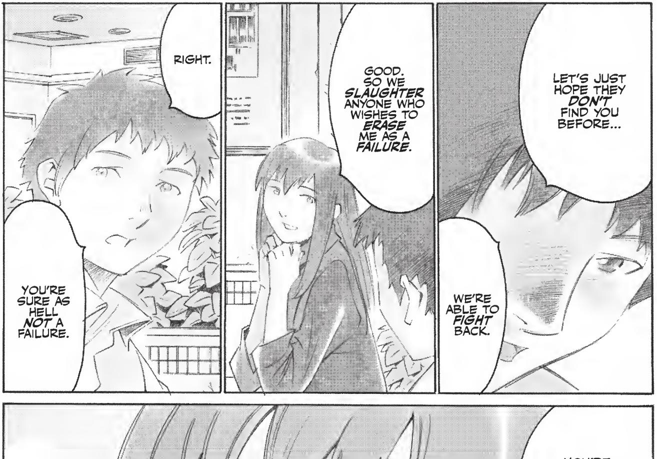

YES. I SHALL *BECOME* YOU...AND *BLEND* INTO HUMAN SOCIETY.
HUNH...
WELL, IN THAT CASE, IT'D PROBABLY BE MORE *EFFECTIVE* JUST TO LEAVE ME ALIVE.
AND *WHY* SHOULD I?
WELL... I'M TOO *HIGH* PROFILE. PEOPLE KNOW ME. YOU TRY AND TAKE MY PLACE, AND PEOPLE'LL NOTICE. PLUS, YOU'RE IN THE *BEST* FORM AS IT IS. A *STUCK UP* TEACHER'S PET LIKE YURIHARA MINAKO *DOESN'T* HAVE ANY FRIENDS. PEOPLE DON'T GIVE A *CRAP* ABOUT HER.

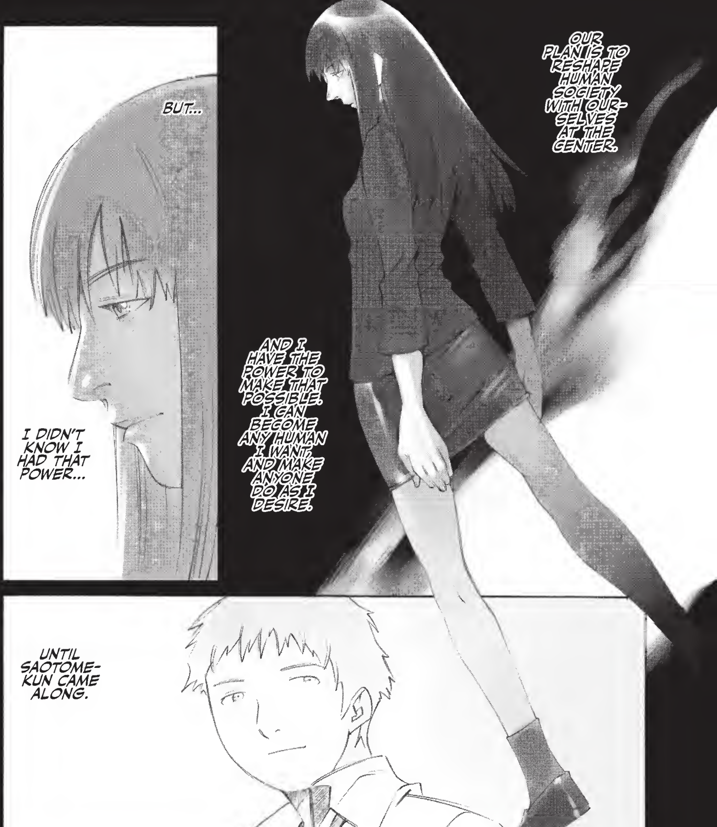

IT'S THE SAME WITH KIRIMA NAGI. I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO DATE HER...
I WANTED HER TO **KILL ME**.
I WANTED TO **DIE**. I WANTED THIS POWERFUL BEING TO **RIP ME APART**.
I WAS BITTERLY DISAPPOINTED, TO SAY THE LEAST.
WHY ARE YOU SO *QUIET*?
WHY DON'T YOU *STRUGGLE* OR *BEG* LIKE THE *OTHERS*?
......
YOU AREN'T *SCARED*?

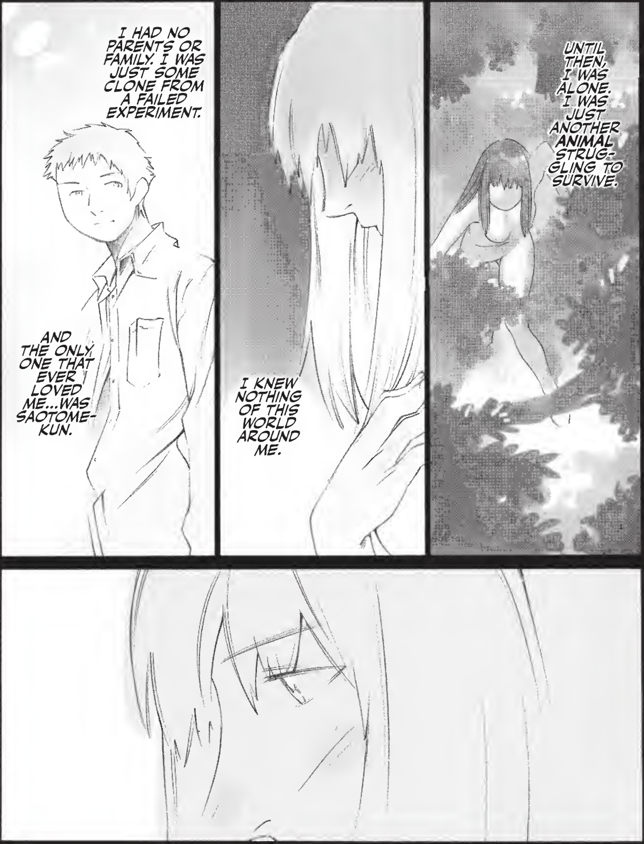

THAT'S BECAUSE I...I THINK I *LOVE* YOU.
EH?

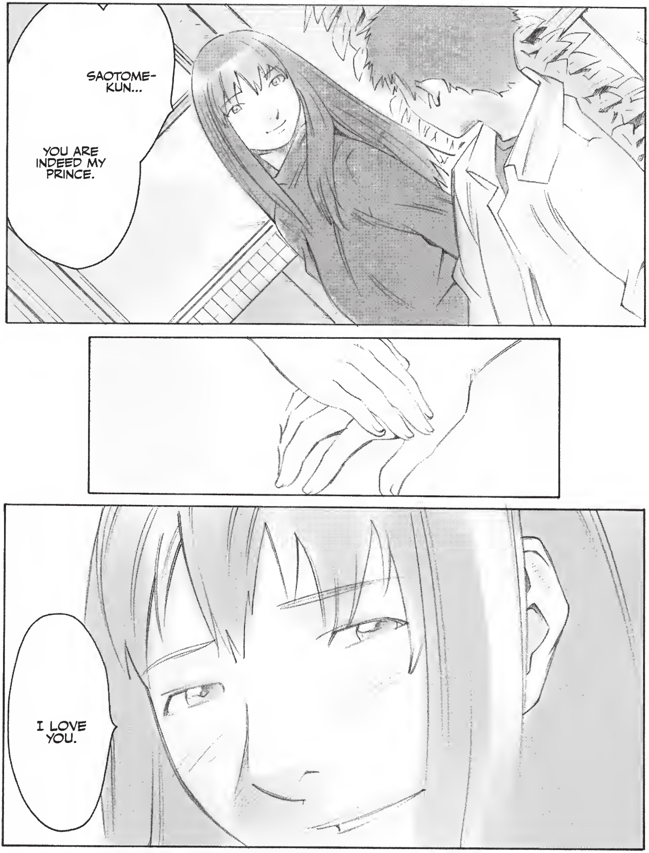

YOU WERE RIGHT, THOUGH, SAOTOME-KUN.
THIS FORM **DOES** FIT MY NEEDS **WELL.**
NOBODY CARES IF YURIHARA MINAKO **IGNORES** THEM IN CLASS.
THEY JUST THINK I'VE **ALWAYS** BEEN LIKE THIS.
I TOLD YOU SO.
EVEN YURIHARA MINAKO'S OWN **PARENTS** DON'T NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE. IT'S **HILARIOUS!**
ARE **ALL** HUMANS LIKE THAT?
MOSTLY. BUT BE CAREFUL... THERE ARE A FEW **EGOISTS** WHO THINK OTHER PEOPLE ARE JUST AN EXTENSION OF THEMSELVES.
MY PARENTS ARE LIKE THAT.
MMM...
WANT ME TO *EAT* THEM?

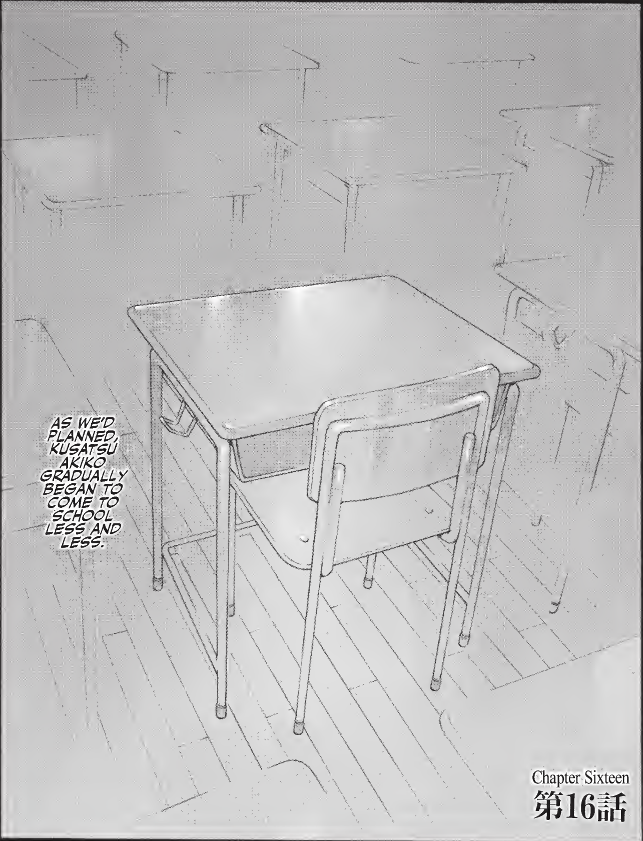

NOT YET.
IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THAT.
TRUE. BEST TO BE *CAUTIOUS*.
THIS WORLD WILL BE ***OURS*** SOON ENOUGH.
EXACTLY.
HOME MADE
Tristan
SHOULD WE MAKE OURSELVES SOME ***MORE*** SLAVES?
YES, I'D LIKE TO HAVE TWO OR THREE MORE AS ***GUINEA PIGS***.
BUT EVENTUALLY, I'D LIKE TO HAVE A WHOLE ***ARMY*** OF THEM.
BUT THERE MUST BE ***AGENTS*** FROM THE ***INSTITUTION*** PURSUING ME.
WHAT DO WE ***DO*** ABOUT THEM?


LET'S JUST HOPE THEY *DON'T* FIND YOU BEFORE...
WE'RE ABLE TO *FIGHT* BACK.
GOOD. SO WE *SLAUGHTER* ANYONE WHO WISHES TO *ERASE* ME AS A *FAILURE.*
RIGHT.
YOU'RE SURE AS HELL *NOT* A FAILURE.
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE NEW *RULER OF THE WORLD.*

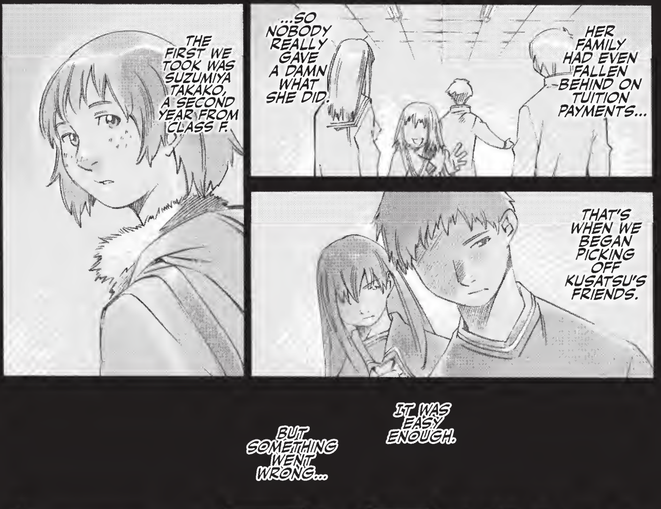

OUR PLAN IS TO RESHAPE HUMAN SOCIETY WITH OURSELVES AT THE CENTER.
AND I HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE THAT POSSIBLE. I CAN BECOME ANY HUMAN I WANT, AND MAKE ANYONE DO AS I DESIRE.
BUT...
I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD THAT POWER...
UNTIL SAOTOME-KUN CAME ALONG.

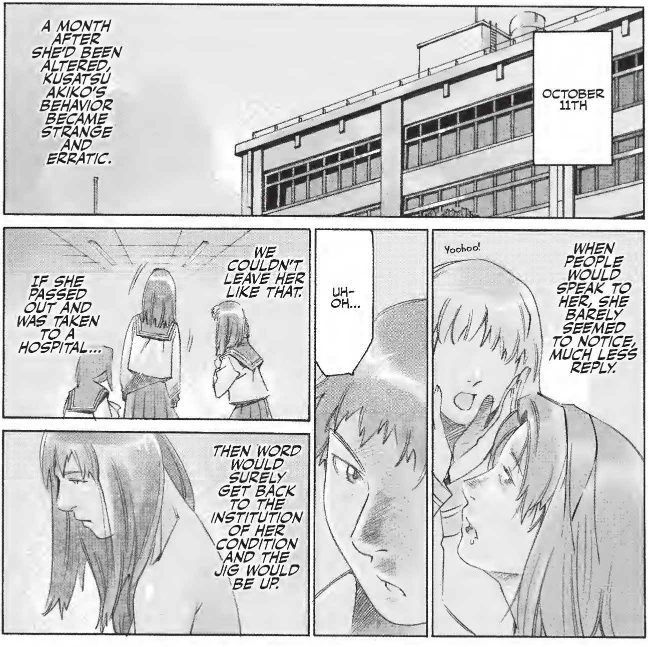

UNTIL THEN, I WAS ALONE. I WAS JUST ANOTHER ANIMAL STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE.
I KNEW NOTHING OF THIS WORLD AROUND ME.
I HAD NO PARENTS OR FAMILY. I WAS JUST SOME CLONE FROM A FAILED EXPERIMENT.
AND THE ONLY ONE THAT EVER LOVED ME...WAS SAOTOME-KUN.

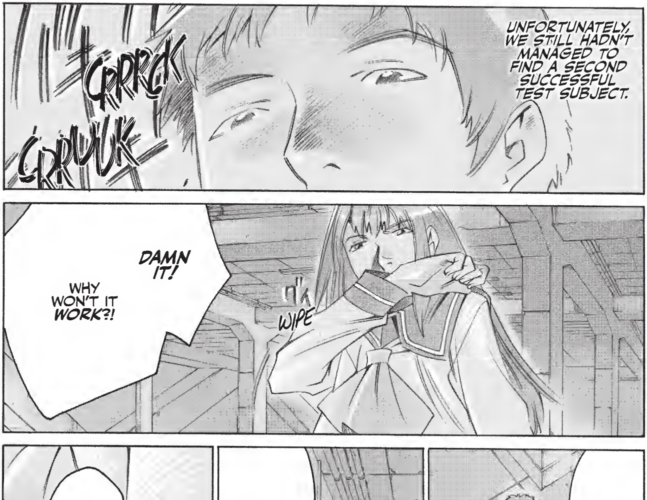

SAOTOME-KUN...
YOU ARE INDEED MY PRINCE.
I LOVE YOU.

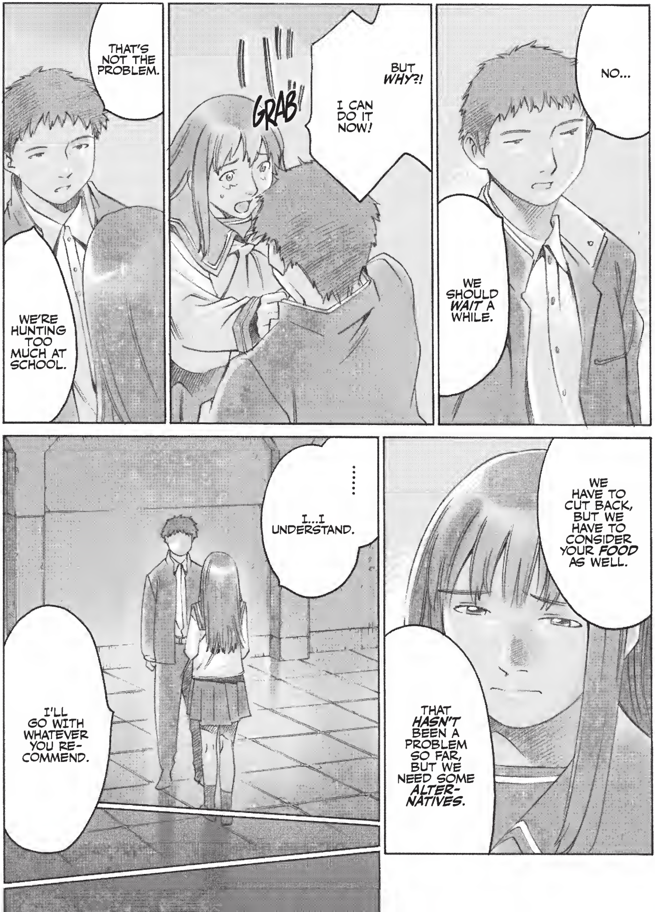

AS WE'D PLANNED, KUSATSU AKIKO GRADUALLY BEGAN TO COME TO SCHOOL LESS AND LESS.

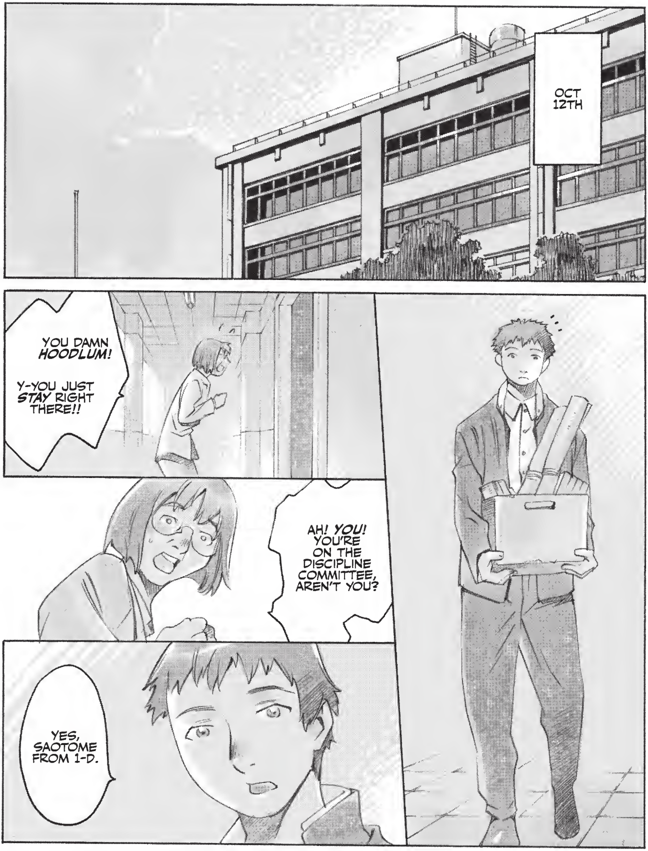
Chapter Sixteen
第16話

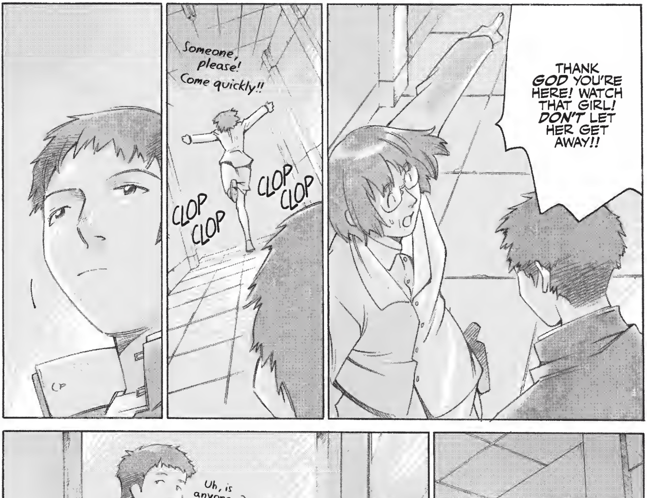

THE FIRST WE TOOK WAS SUZUMIYA TAKAKO, A SECOND YEAR FROM CLASS F.
HER FAMILY HAD EVEN FALLEN BEHIND ON TUITION PAYMENTS...
...SO NOBODY REALLY GAVE A DAMN WHAT SHE DID.
THAT'S WHEN WE BEGAN PICKING OFF KUSATSU'S FRIENDS.
IT WAS EASY ENOUGH.
WE WERE KILLING GIRLS ONE AFTER THE OTHER, BUT WE WERE CAREFUL.
WE LAID A FEW RED HERRINGS TO HELP COVER OUR TRACKS. ALWAYS GO FOR THE PEOPLE THAT WON'T BE MISSED... THAT'S THE KEY.
BUT SOMETHING WENT WRONG...
IT SEEMS IT REQUIRES A VERY DELICATE BALANCE.
OH WELL, THAT'S WHAT EXPERIMENTS ARE FOR.
WE WEREN'T ABLE TO ALTER THEM LIKE KUSATSU.
THEY JUST DIED AND NEVER RETURNED.

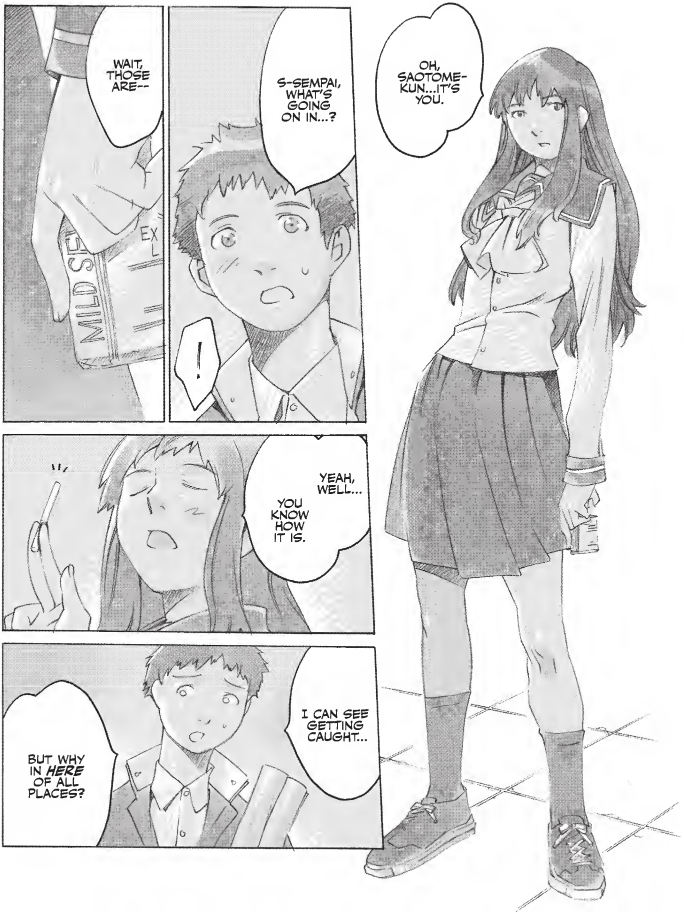

OCTOBER 11TH
A MONTH AFTER SHE'D BEEN ALTERED, KUSATSU AKIKO'S BEHAVIOR BECAME STRANGE AND ERRATIC.
WHEN PEOPLE WOULD SPEAK TO HER, SHE BARELY SEEMED TO NOTICE, MUCH LESS REPLY.
Yoohoo!
UH-OH...
WE COULDN'T LEAVE HER LIKE THAT.
IF SHE PASSED OUT AND WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL...
THEN WORD WOULD SURELY GET BACK TO THE INSTITUTION OF HER CONDITION AND THE JIG WOULD BE UP.
SO YURIHARA WAS FORCED TO DISPOSE OF OUR LITTLE PUPPET...
AND THE FIRST STAGE OF OUR EXPERIMENT WAS OVER.

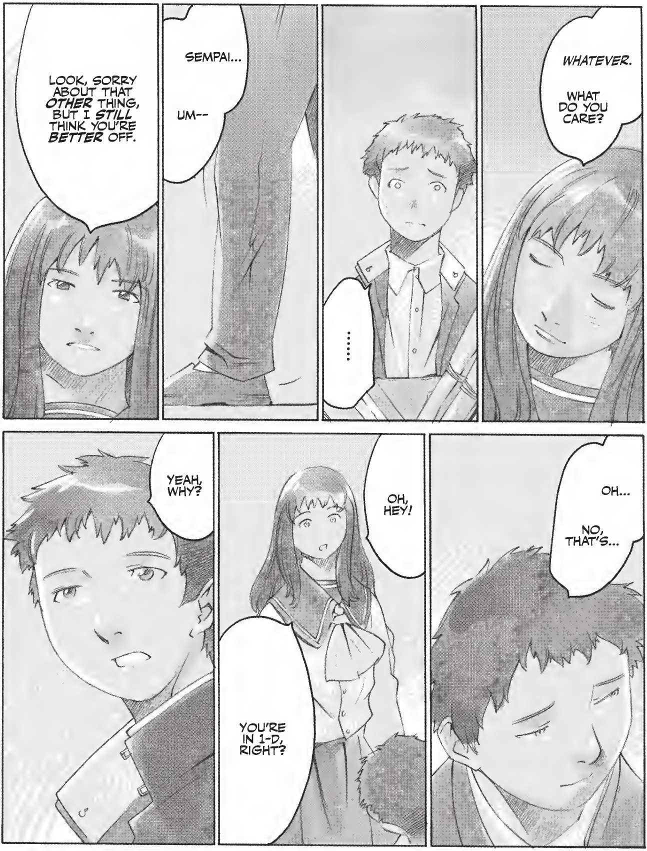

UNFORTUNATELY, WE STILL HADN'T MANAGED TO FIND A SECOND SUCCESSFUL TEST SUBJECT.
GRRRCK
GRRUUK
DAMN IT!
WHY WON'T IT *WORK*?!
WIPE
DON'T *WORRY* ABOUT IT.
WE'LL HAVE *OTHER* OPPORTUNITIES.
I KNOW THAT, BUT...
I'M SORRY.
I'LL GET IT RIGHT NEXT TIME.
GRIP

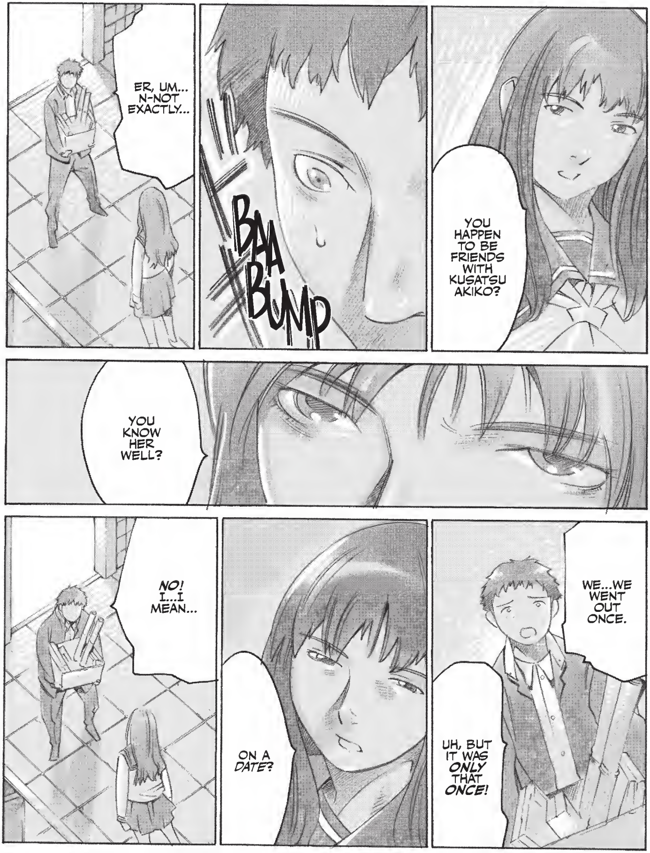

NO...
WE SHOULD *WAIT* A WHILE.
BUT *WHY?!*
I CAN DO IT NOW*!*
GRAB
THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM.
WE'RE HUNTING TOO MUCH AT SCHOOL.
WE HAVE TO CUT BACK, BUT WE HAVE TO CONSIDER YOUR *FOOD* AS WELL.
THAT *HASN'T* BEEN A PROBLEM SO FAR, BUT WE NEED SOME *ALTERNATIVES.*
......
I...I UNDERSTAND.
I'LL GO WITH WHATEVER YOU RECOMMEND.

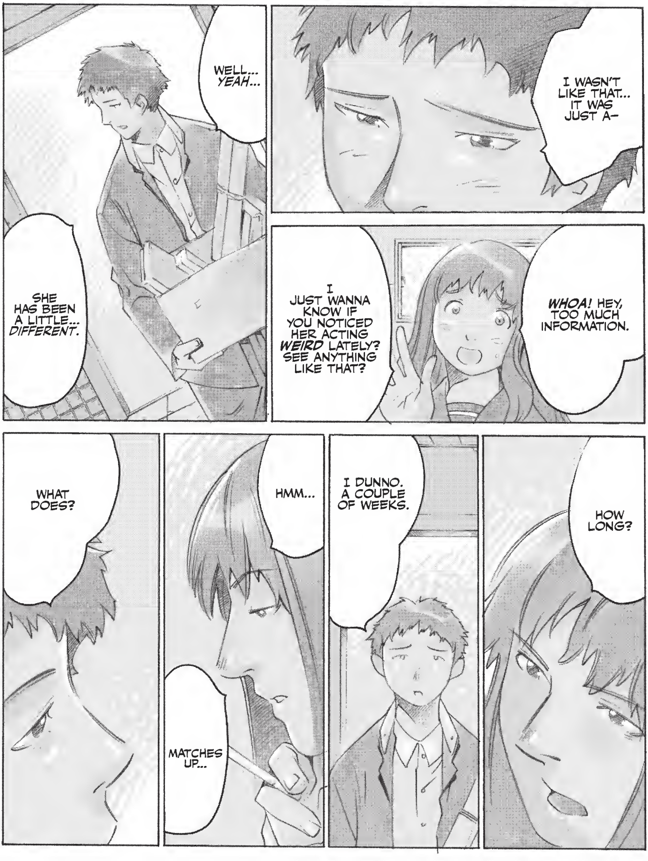

OCT 12TH
YOU DAMN *HOODLUM!*
Y-YOU JUST *STAY* RIGHT THERE!!
AH! *YOU!* YOU'RE ON THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE, AREN'T YOU?
YES, SAOTOME FROM 1-D.

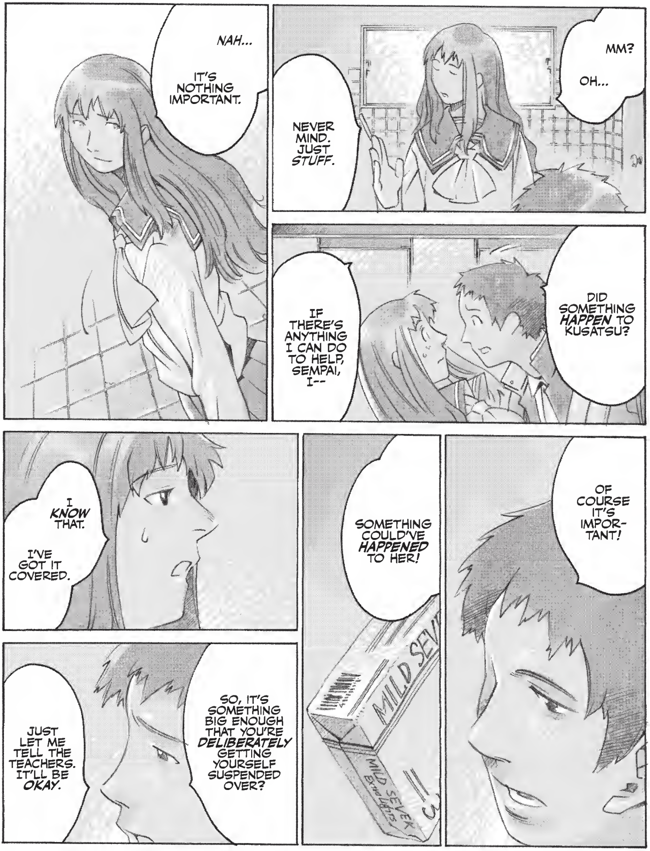

Someone, please! Come quickly!!
CLOP CLOP
CLOP CLOP
THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! WATCH THAT GIRL! DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!!
Uh, is anyone...?
女子 LADIES
STAFF RESTROOM
職員トイレ

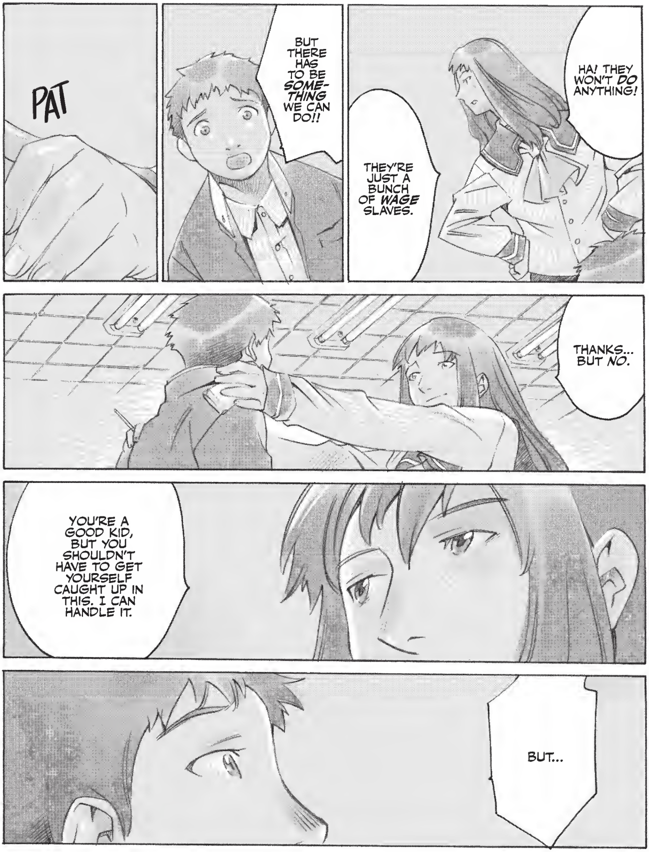

OH, SAOTOME-KUN...IT'S YOU.
S-SEMPAI, WHAT'S GOING ON IN...?
!
WAIT, THOSE ARE--
MILD SE
EX L
YEAH, WELL...
YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.
I CAN SEE GETTING CAUGHT...
BUT WHY IN ***HERE*** OF ALL PLACES?

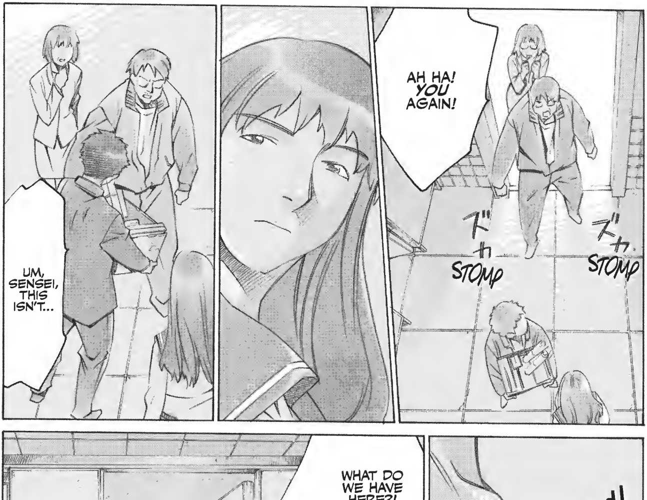

WHATEVER. WHAT DO YOU CARE?
......
SEMPAI... UM--
LOOK, SORRY ABOUT THAT *OTHER* THING, BUT I *STILL* THINK YOU'RE *BETTER* OFF.
OH... NO, THAT'S...
OH, HEY! YOU'RE IN 1-D, RIGHT?
YEAH, WHY?

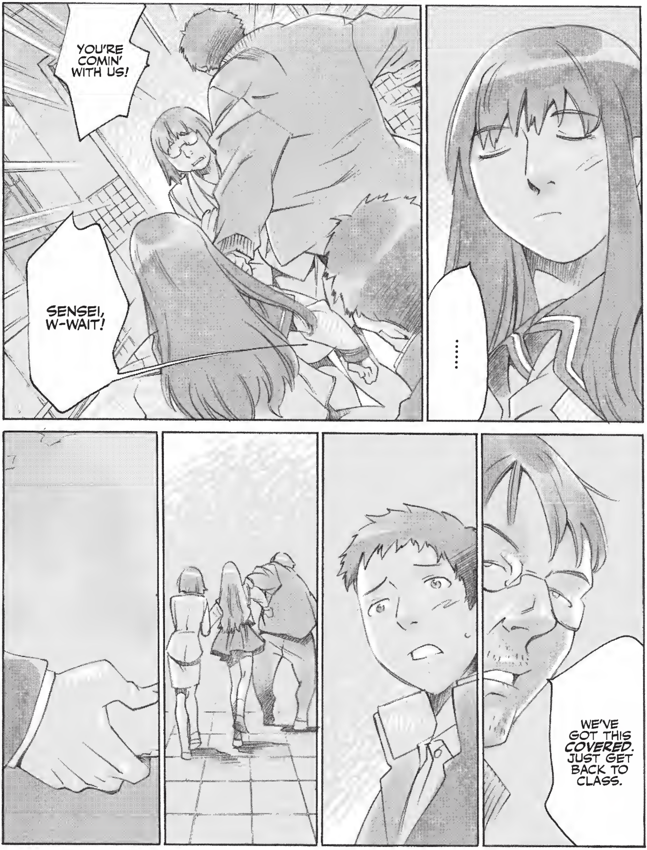

YOU HAPPEN TO BE FRIENDS WITH KUSATSU AKIKO?
BAA BUMP
ER, UM... N-NOT EXACTLY...
YOU KNOW HER WELL?
WE...WE WENT OUT ONCE.
UH, BUT IT WAS *ONLY* THAT *ONCE!*
ON A *DATE?*
NO! I...I MEAN...

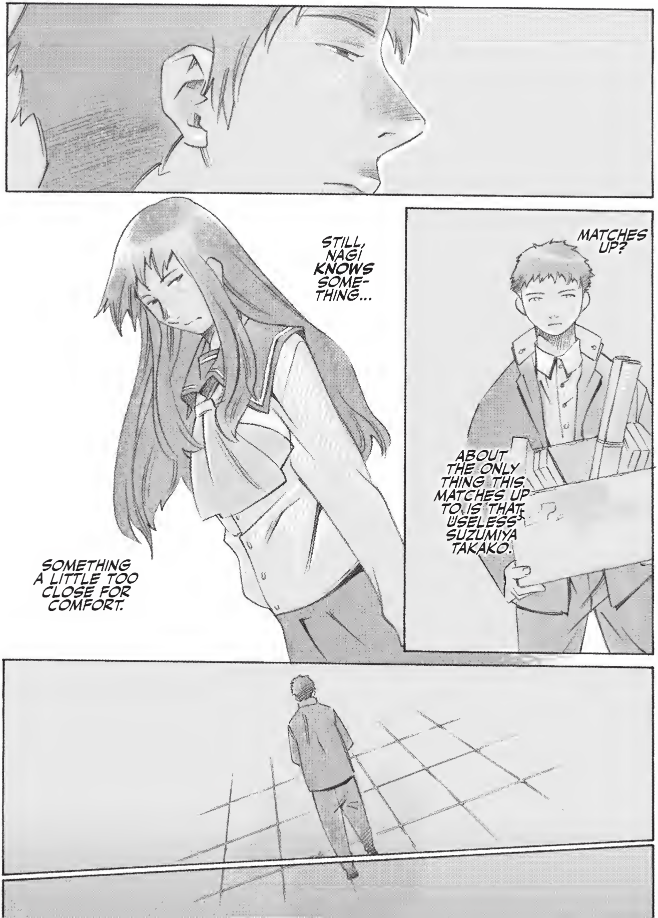

I WASN'T LIKE THAT... IT WAS JUST A–
WHOA! HEY, TOO MUCH INFORMATION.
I JUST WANNA KNOW IF YOU NOTICED HER ACTING *WEIRD* LATELY? SEE ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
WELL... *YEAH*...
SHE HAS BEEN A LITTLE... *DIFFERENT*.
HOW LONG?
I DUNNO. A COUPLE OF WEEKS.
HMM...
MATCHES UP...
WHAT DOES?


MM?
OH...
NEVER MIND. JUST *STUFF*.
DID SOMETHING *HAPPEN* TO KUSATSU?
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP, SEMPAI, I--
NAH...
IT'S NOTHING IMPORTANT.
OF COURSE IT'S IMPORTANT!
SOMETHING COULD'VE *HAPPENED* TO HER!
MILD SEV
MILD SEVEN Extra Lights
I *KNOW* THAT.
I'VE GOT IT COVERED.
SO, IT'S SOMETHING BIG ENOUGH THAT YOU'RE *DELIBERATELY* GETTING YOURSELF SUSPENDED OVER?
JUST LET ME TELL THE TEACHERS. IT'LL BE *OKAY*.


HA! THEY WON'T *DO* ANYTHING!
THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF *WAGE* SLAVES.
BUT THERE HAS TO BE *SOMETHING* WE CAN DO!!
PAT
THANKS... BUT *NO.*
YOU'RE A GOOD KID, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO GET YOURSELF CAUGHT UP IN THIS. I CAN HANDLE IT.
BUT...

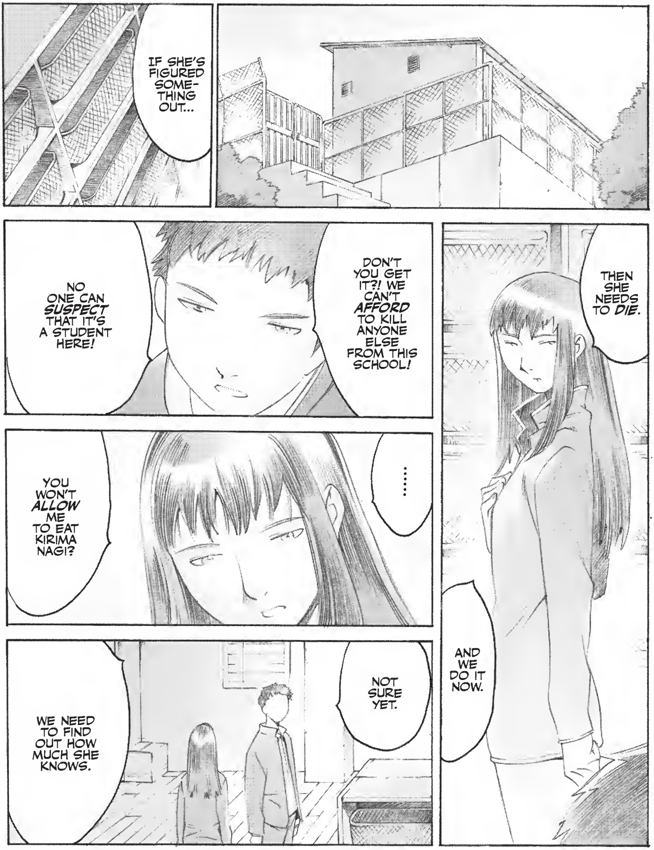

AH HA! *YOU* AGAIN!
ズカ STOMP
ズカ STOMP
UM, SENSEI, THIS ISN'T...
SNATCH
WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?!
LOOKS LIKE *EVIDENCE!*

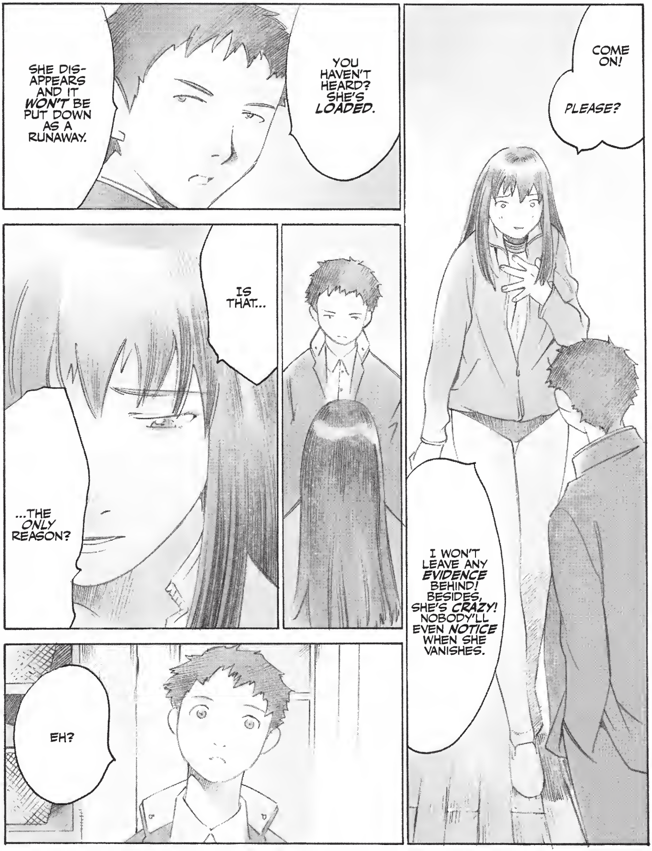

......
YOU'RE COMIN' WITH US!
SENSEI, W-WAIT!
WE'VE GOT THIS *COVERED*. JUST GET BACK TO CLASS.

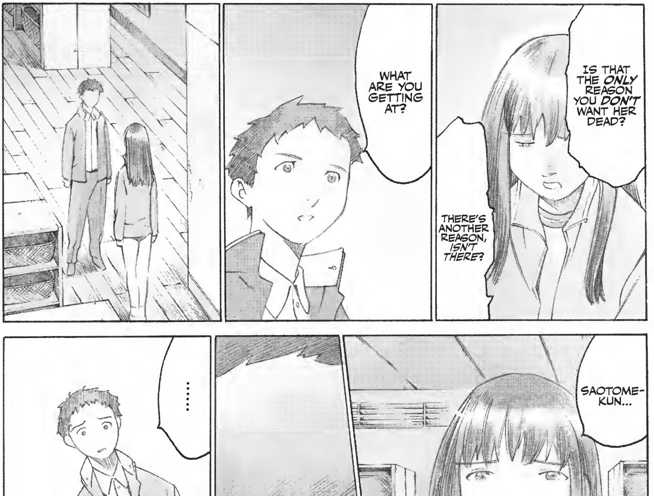

MATCHES UP?
ABOUT THE ONLY THING THIS MATCHES UP TO IS THAT USELESS SUZUMIYA TAKAKO.
STILL, NAGI **KNOWS** SOMETHING...
SOMETHING A LITTLE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT.

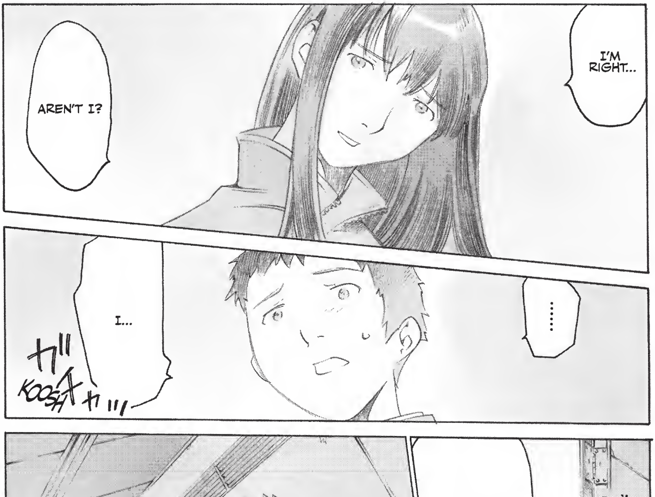
第17話

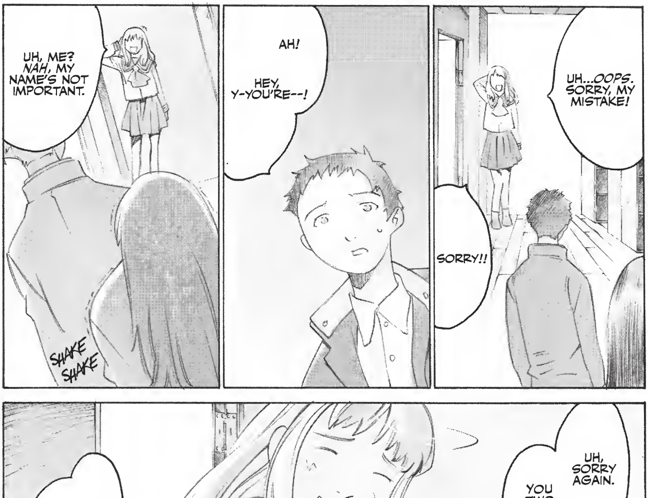
Chapter Seventeen

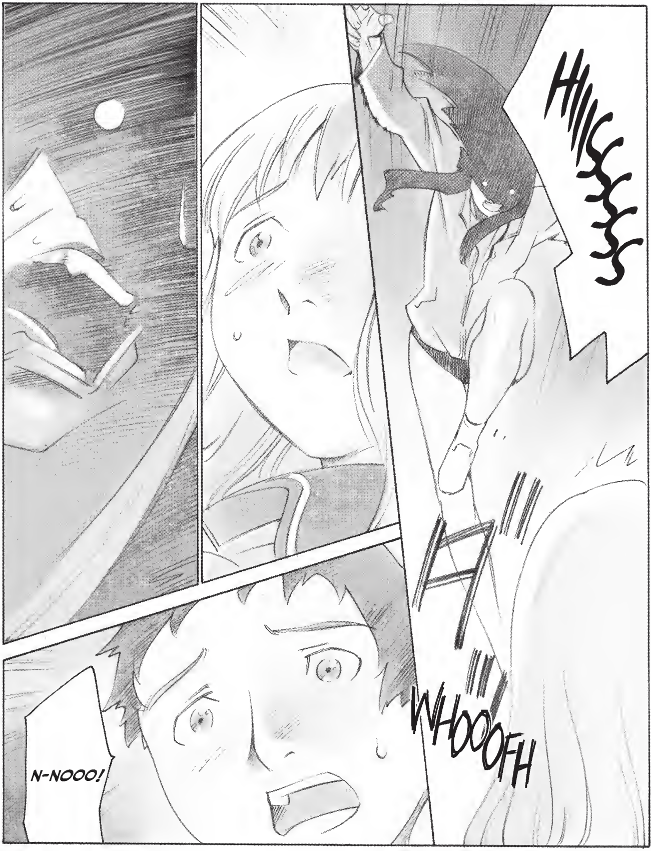

IF SHE'S FIGURED SOMETHING OUT...
THEN SHE NEEDS TO *DIE*.
DON'T YOU GET IT?! WE CAN'T *AFFORD* TO KILL ANYONE ELSE FROM THIS SCHOOL!
NO ONE CAN *SUSPECT* THAT IT'S A STUDENT HERE!
......
YOU WON'T *ALLOW* ME TO EAT KIRIMA NAGI?
NOT SURE YET.
WE NEED TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH SHE KNOWS.
AND WE DO IT NOW.

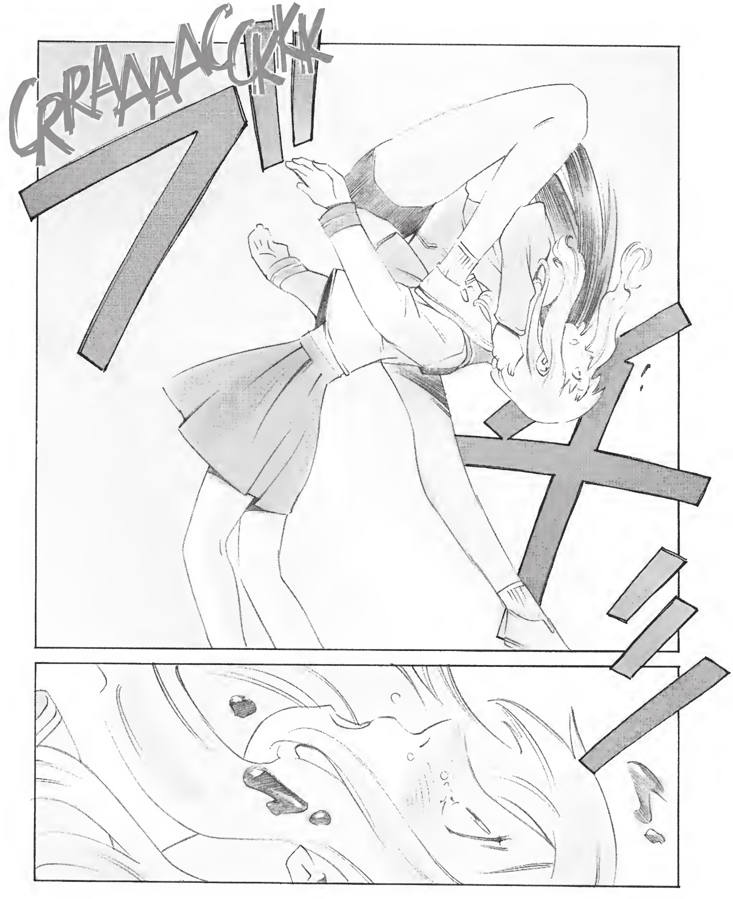

COME ON!
PLEASE?
I WON'T LEAVE ANY ***EVIDENCE*** BEHIND! BESIDES, SHE'S ***CRAZY!*** NOBODY'LL EVEN ***NOTICE*** WHEN SHE VANISHES.
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD? SHE'S ***LOADED.***
SHE DISAPPEARS AND IT ***WON'T*** BE PUT DOWN AS A RUNAWAY.
IS THAT...
...THE *ONLY* REASON?
EH?

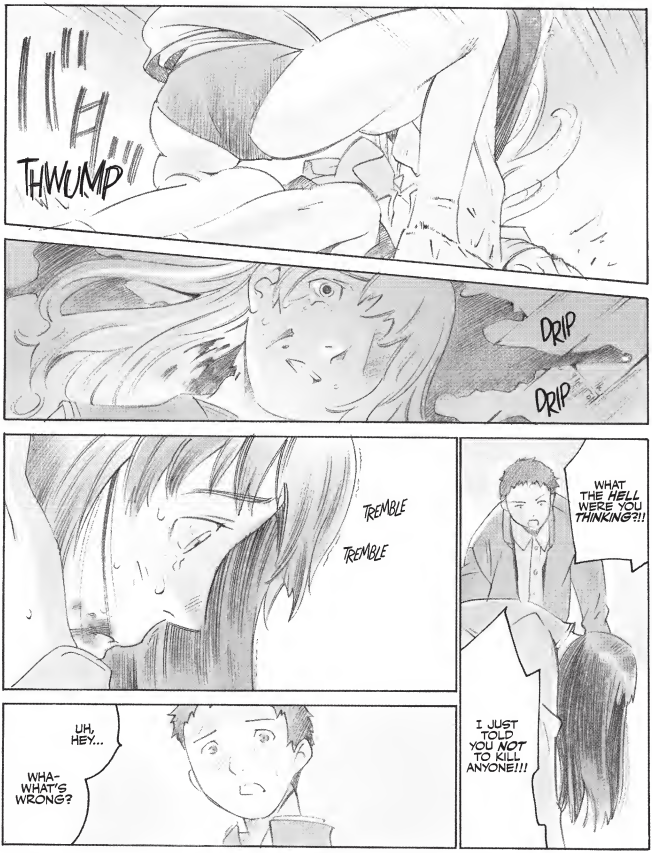

IS THAT THE *ONLY* REASON YOU *DON'T* WANT HER DEAD?
THERE'S ANOTHER REASON, *ISN'T THERE?*
WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?
SAOTOME-KUN...
YOU'RE IN *LOVE* WITH HER, AREN'T YOU?
......
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?

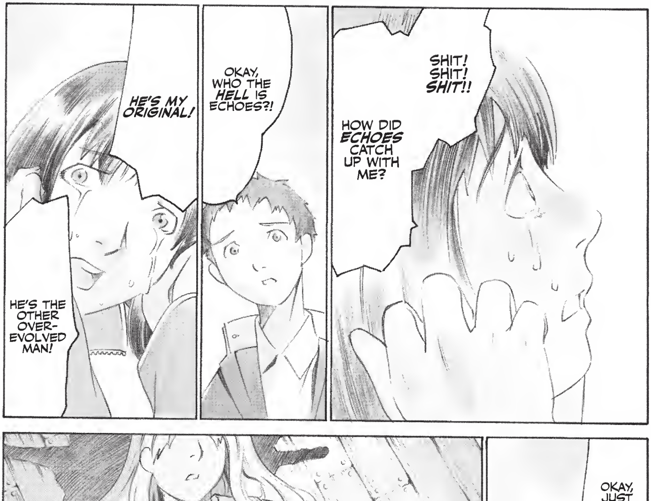

I'M RIGHT...
AREN'T I?
......
I...
KOOSH
smile
ECHOES, WHAT ARE YA DOIN' IN HERE?

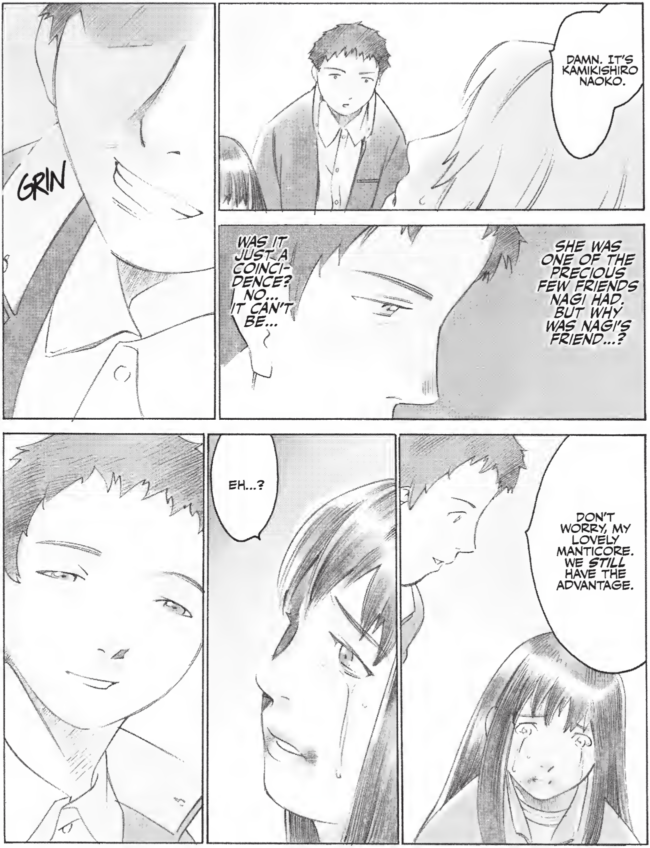

UH, ME? *NAH*, MY NAME'S NOT IMPORTANT.
SHAKE SHAKE
AH!
HEY, Y-YOU'RE--!
UH...*OOPS*. SORRY, MY MISTAKE!
SORRY!!
UH, SORRY AGAIN.
YOU TWO JUST HAVE **FUN** NOW!
UM, TAKE YOUR TIME!
BYE NOW!
ル RU
ブル RUUH
ブル RUUH
ル RUH
ブル RUUH
ブル RUUUH

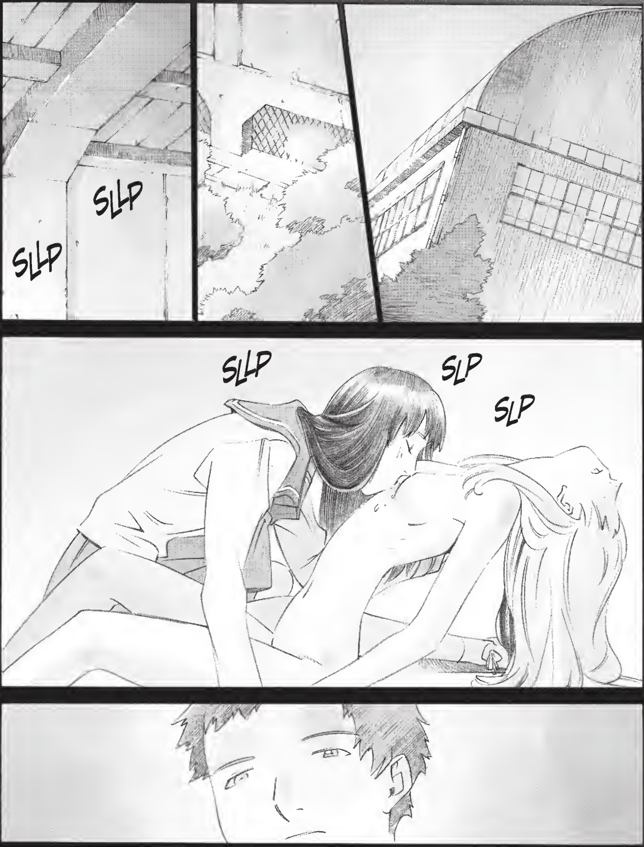

HIISSSSSS
WHOOOFH
N-NOOO!

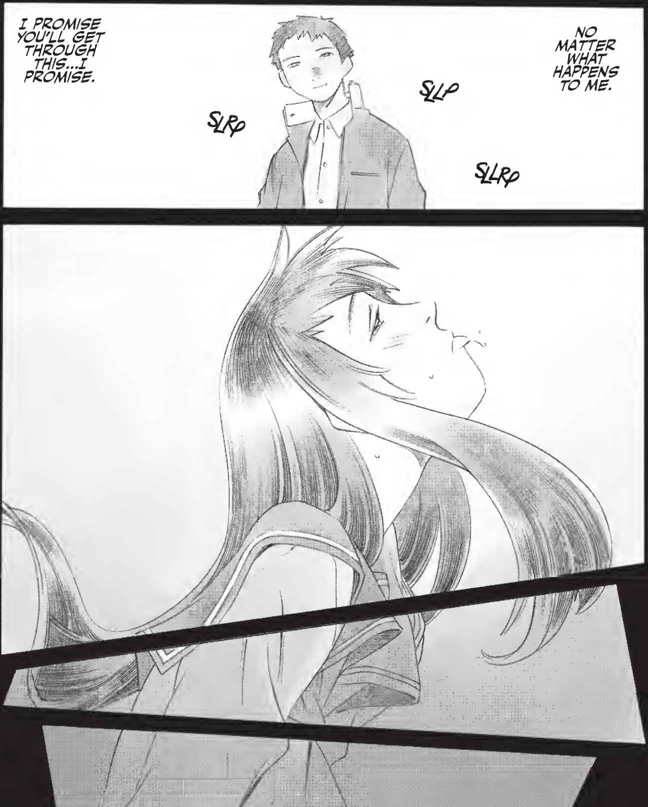

CRRAAAACCKKK

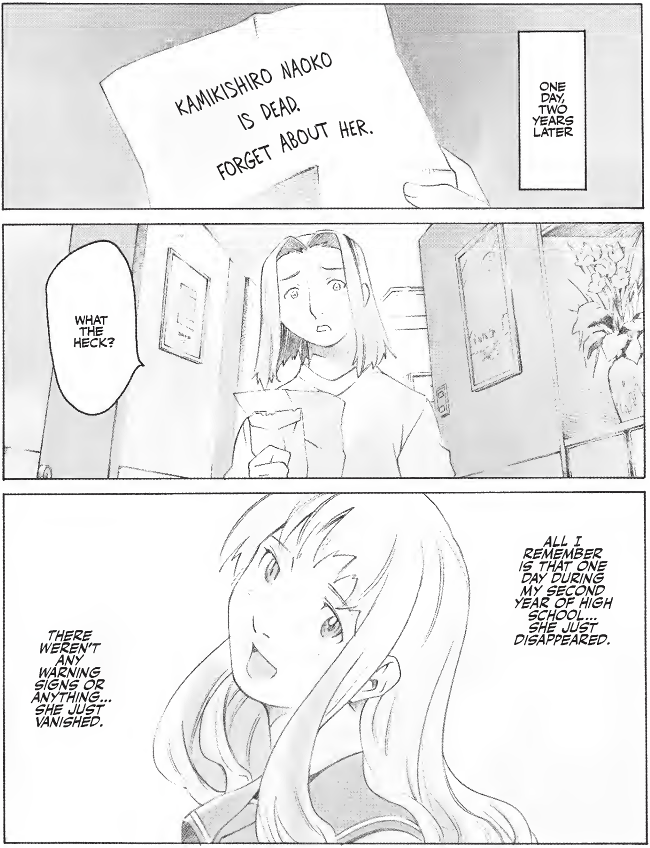

THWUMP
DRIP
DRIP
WHAT THE *HELL* WERE YOU *THINKING*?!!
I JUST TOLD YOU *NOT* TO KILL ANYONE!!!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
UH, HEY...
WHA-WHAT'S WRONG?

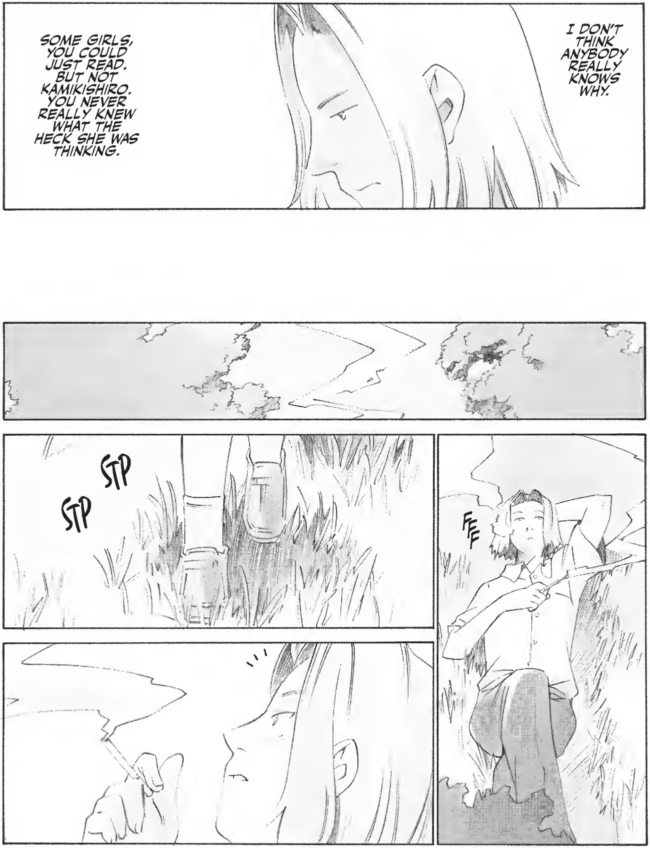

SHIT! SHIT! *SHIT!!*
HOW DID *ECHOES* CATCH UP WITH ME?
OKAY, WHO THE *HELL* IS ECHOES?!
HE'S MY ORIGINAL!
HE'S THE OTHER OVER-EVOLVED MAN!
OKAY, JUST CALM DOWN!
YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT ALL *LATER.*
FIRST THINGS FIRST... WE'VE GOT TO GET *RID* OF THIS BODY.

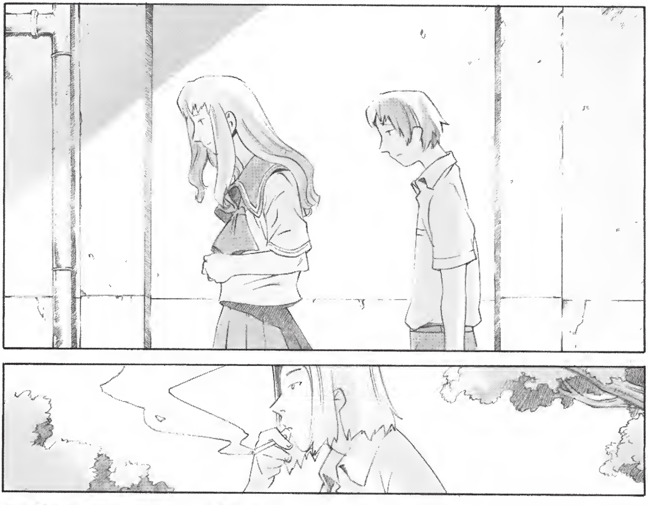

DAMN. IT'S KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO.
SHE WAS ONE OF THE PRECIOUS FEW FRIENDS NAGI HAD. BUT WHY WAS NAGI'S FRIEND...?
WAS IT JUST A COINCIDENCE? NO... IT CAN'T BE...
GRIN
DON'T WORRY, MY LOVELY MANTICORE. WE *STILL* HAVE THE ADVANTAGE.
EH...?

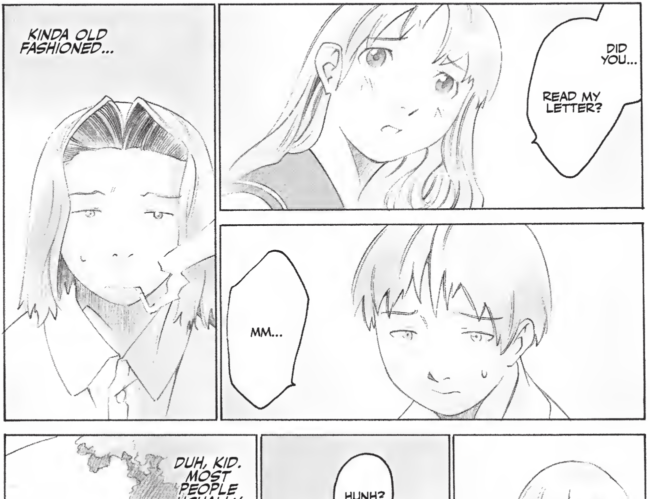

SLLP
SLLP
SLP
SLP
SLLP

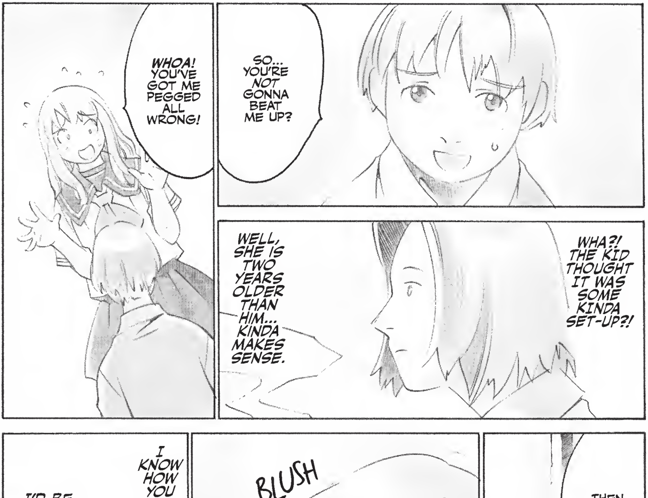

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO ME.
SLLP
SLRP
SLRP
I PROMISE YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS...I PROMISE.

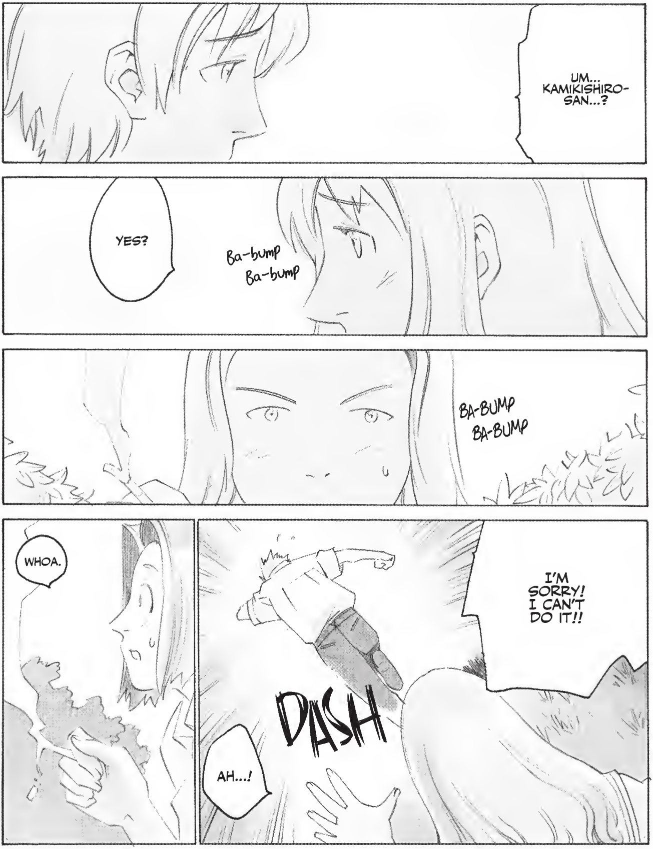

ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO IS DEAD. FORGET ABOUT HER.
WHAT THE HECK?
ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT ONE DAY DURING MY SECOND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL... SHE JUST DISAPPEARED.
THERE WEREN'T ANY WARNING SIGNS OR ANYTHING... SHE JUST VANISHED.

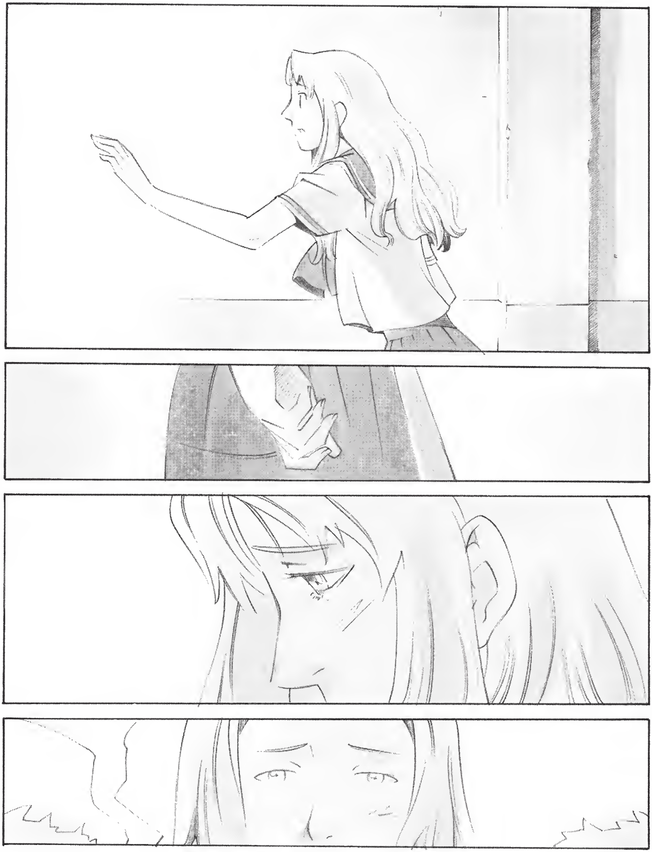

I DON'T THINK ANYBODY REALLY KNOWS WHY.
SOME GIRLS, YOU COULD JUST READ. BUT NOT KAMIKISHIRO. YOU NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT THE HECK SHE WAS THINKING.
FFF
STP
STP

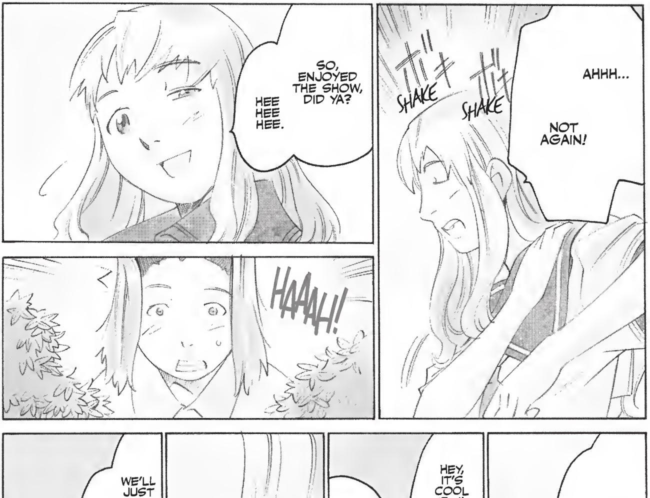


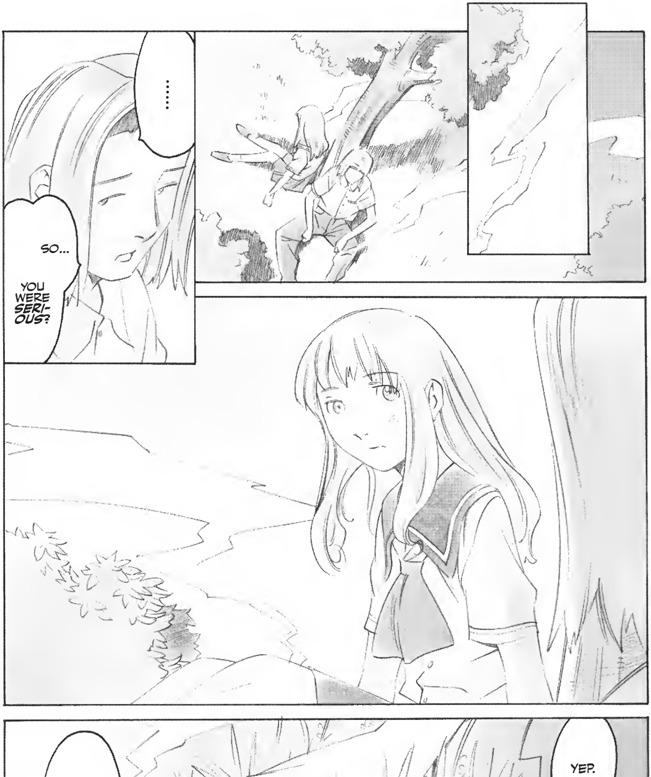

DID YOU... READ MY LETTER?
MM...
KINDA OLD FASHIONED...
ARE YOU... ALONE?
HUNH?
DUH, KID. MOST PEOPLE USUALLY ARE ALONE AT TIMES LIKE THIS!

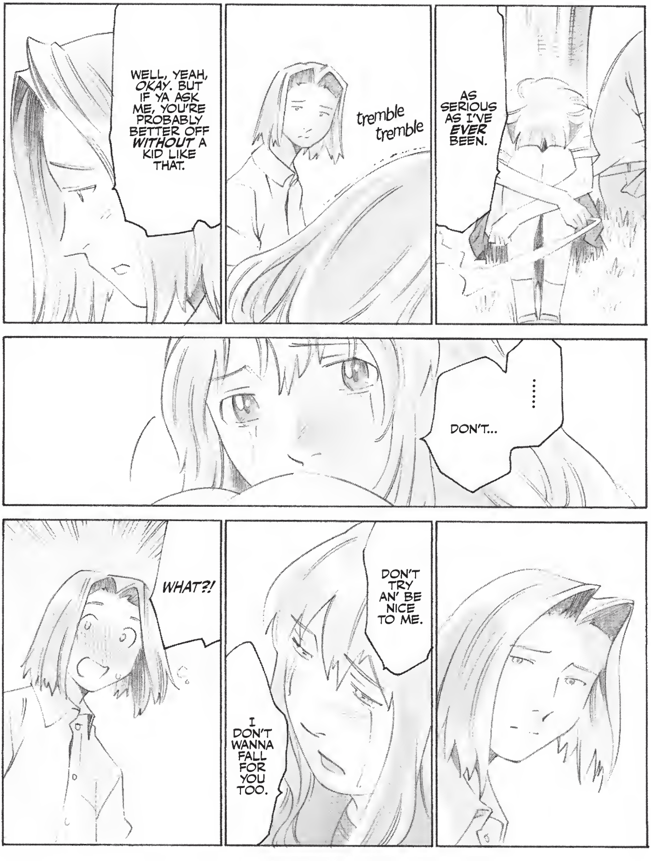

SO... YOU'RE NOT GONNA BEAT ME UP?
WHA?! THE KID THOUGHT IT WAS SOME KINDA SET-UP?!
WELL, SHE IS TWO YEARS OLDER THAN HIM... KINDA MAKES SENSE.
WHOA! YOU'VE GOT ME PEGGED ALL WRONG!
THEN WHAT IS IT?
BLUSH
YOU KNOW...
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, KID!
I'D BE HESITANT TOO IF A PRETTY SENIOR WAS ASKIN' OUT A FRESHMEN.

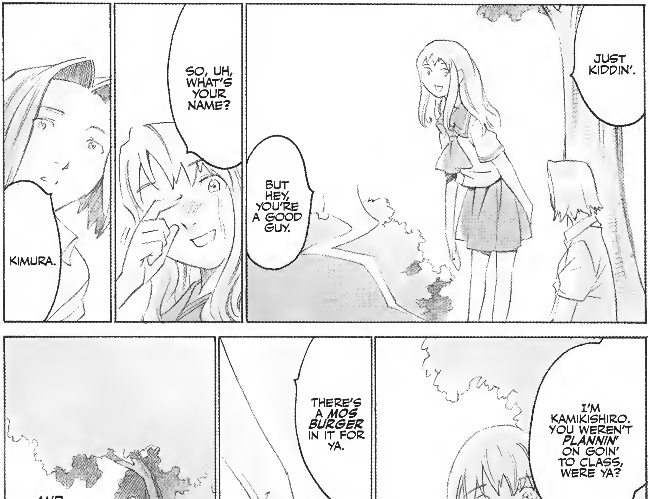

UM... KAMIKISHIRO-SAN...?
YES?
Ba-bump Ba-bump
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP
I'M SORRY! I CAN'T DO IT!!
DASH
AH...!
WHOA.



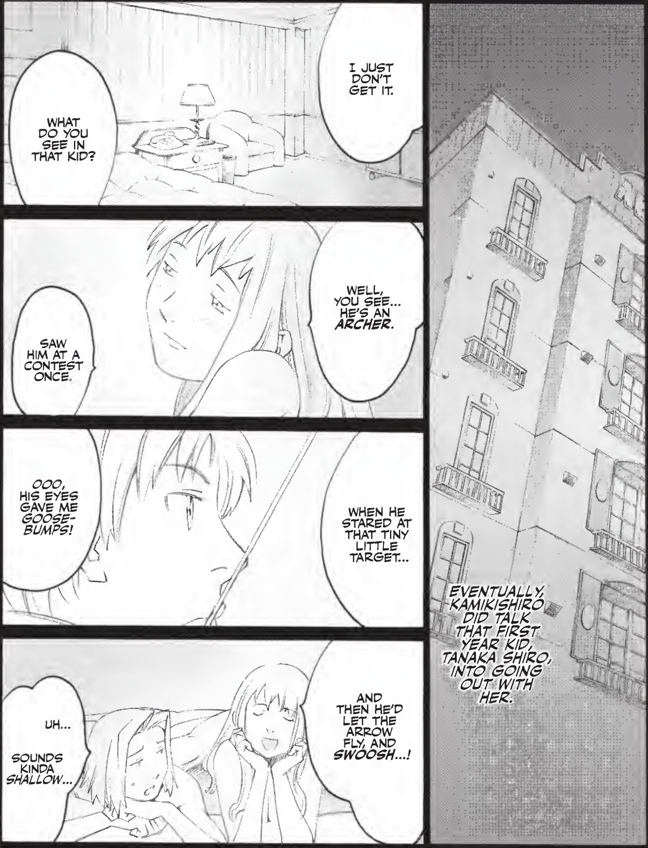

AHHH...
NOT AGAIN!
SHAKE
SHAKE
SO, ENJOYED THE SHOW, DID YA?
HEE HEE HEE.
HAAAH!
UH, N-NO... I MEAN... I DIDN'T MEAN TO WATCH...
RUSTLE
HEY, IT'S COOL IF YA WATCH, JUST TRY *HIDIN'* BETTER NEXT TIME.
I COULD SEE THAT *HUGE* CLOUD OF SMOKE A *MILE* AWAY!
Gotcha
WE'LL JUST SAY...
THIS IS MY *FEE*.
DAMN, I'VE BEEN *DYIN'* FOR A NICOTINE HIT ALL DAY.

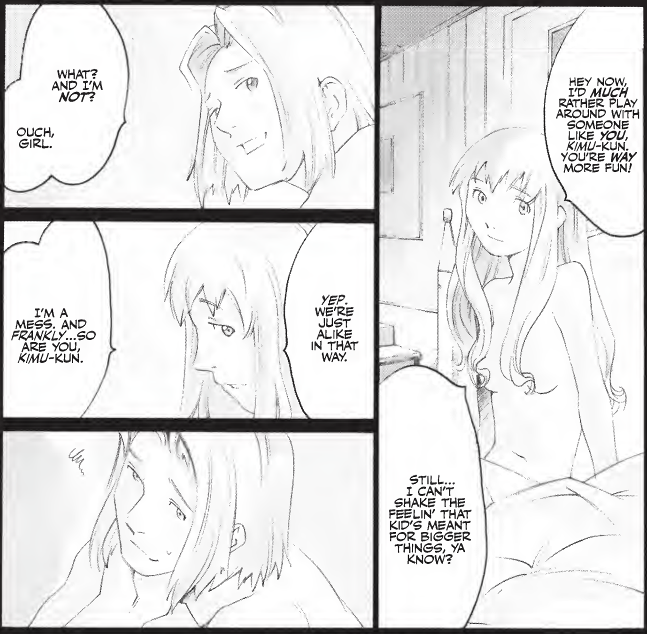

……
SO... YOU WERE SERIOUS?
YEP.
TOTALLY.

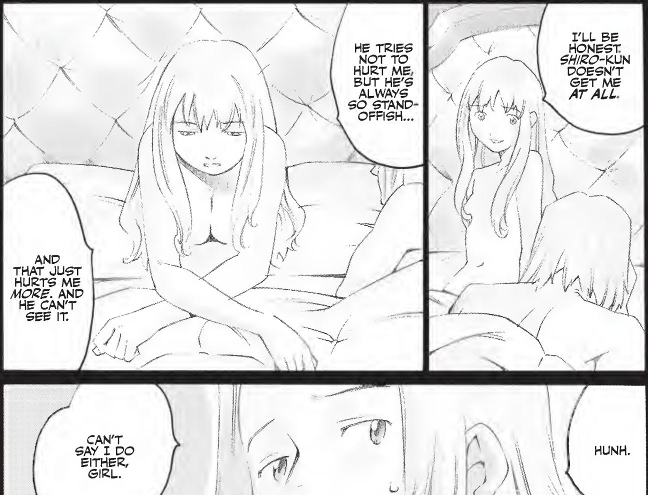

WELL, YEAH, *OKAY*. BUT IF YA ASK ME, YOU'RE PROBABLY BETTER OFF ***WITHOUT*** A KID LIKE THAT.
tremble tremble
AS SERIOUS AS I'VE ***EVER*** BEEN.
......
DON'T...
WHAT?!
DON'T TRY AN' BE NICE TO ME.
I DON'T WANNA FALL FOR YOU TOO.

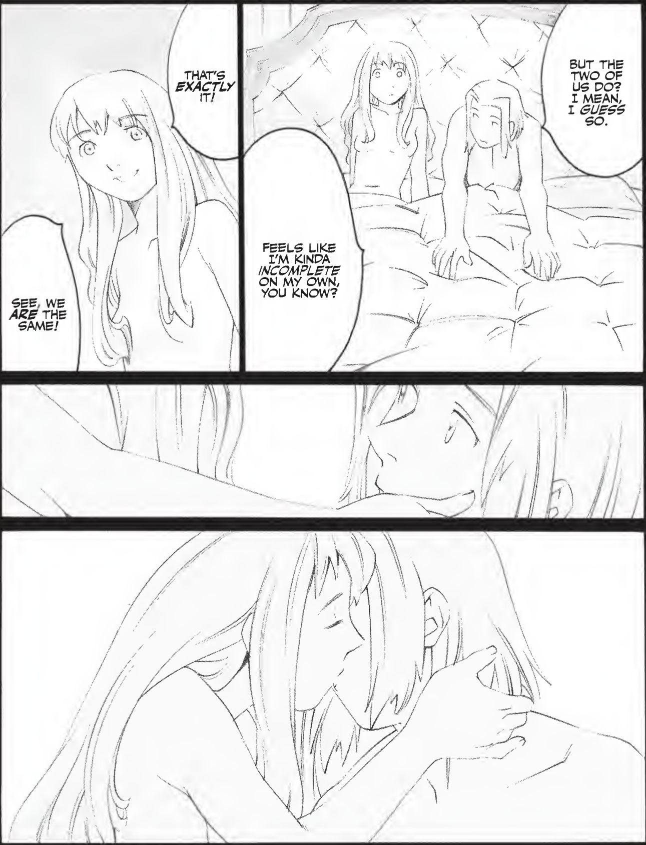

JUST KIDDIN'.
BUT HEY, YOU'RE A GOOD GUY.
SO, UH, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
KIMURA.
I'M KAMIKISHIRO. YOU WEREN'T *PLANNIN'* ON GOIN' TO CLASS, WERE YA?
I KNOW A WAY *OUT* THE BACK. YA WANNA COME WITH?
THERE'S A *MOS BURGER* IN IT FOR YA.
WE CAN CALL IT PAY BACK FOR YOU CHEERIN' ME UP.
AND THAT'S BASICALLY HOW WE GOT STARTED.

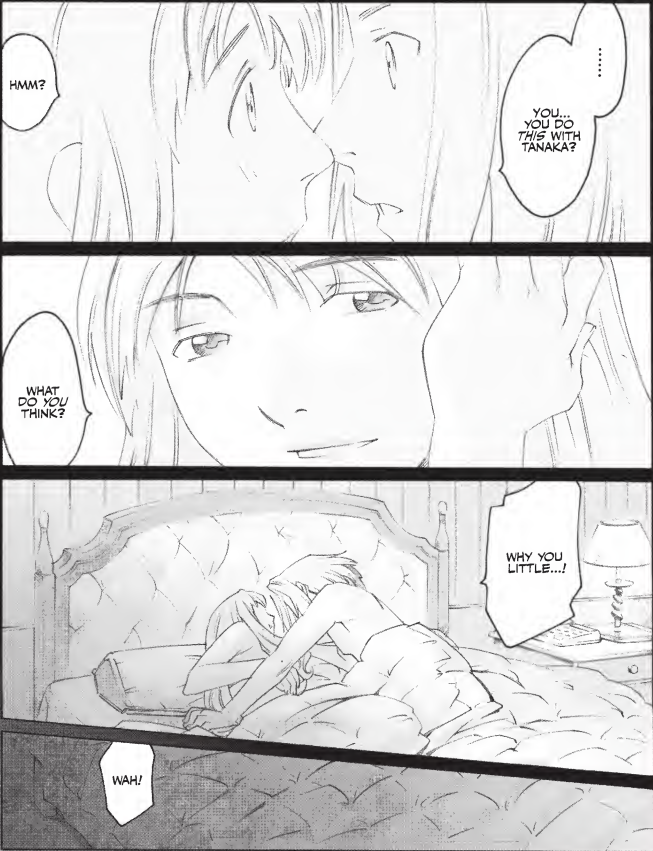
第18話
Chapter Eighteen

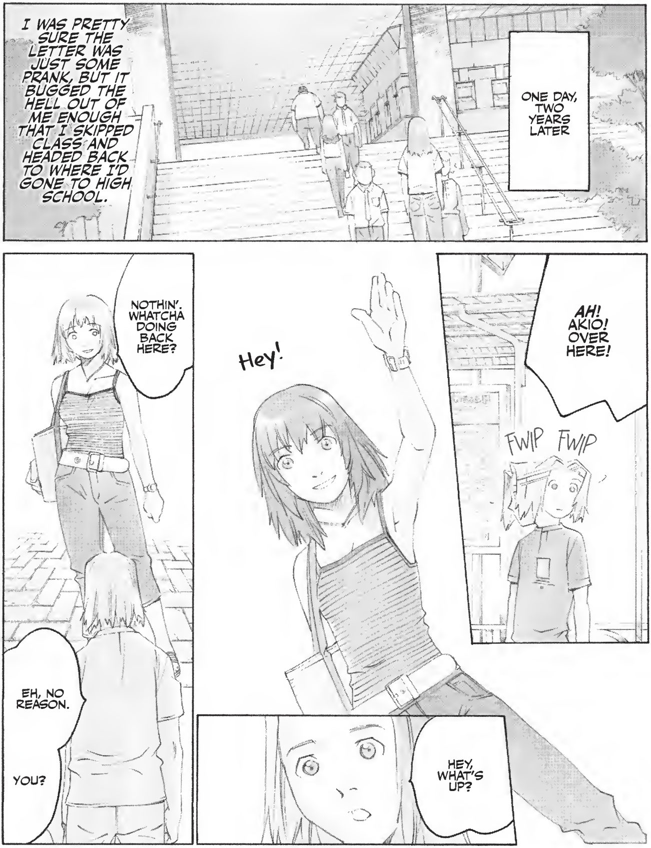

EVENTUALLY, KAMIKISHIRO DID TALK THAT FIRST YEAR KID, TANAKA SHIRO, INTO GOING OUT WITH HER.
I JUST DON'T GET IT.
WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THAT KID?
WELL, YOU SEE... HE'S AN *ARCHER*.
SAW HIM AT A CONTEST ONCE.
WHEN HE STARED AT THAT TINY LITTLE TARGET...
OOO, HIS EYES GAVE ME *GOOSEBUMPS!*
AND THEN HE'D LET THE ARROW FLY, AND *SWOOSH*...!
UH...
SOUNDS KINDA *SHALLOW*...

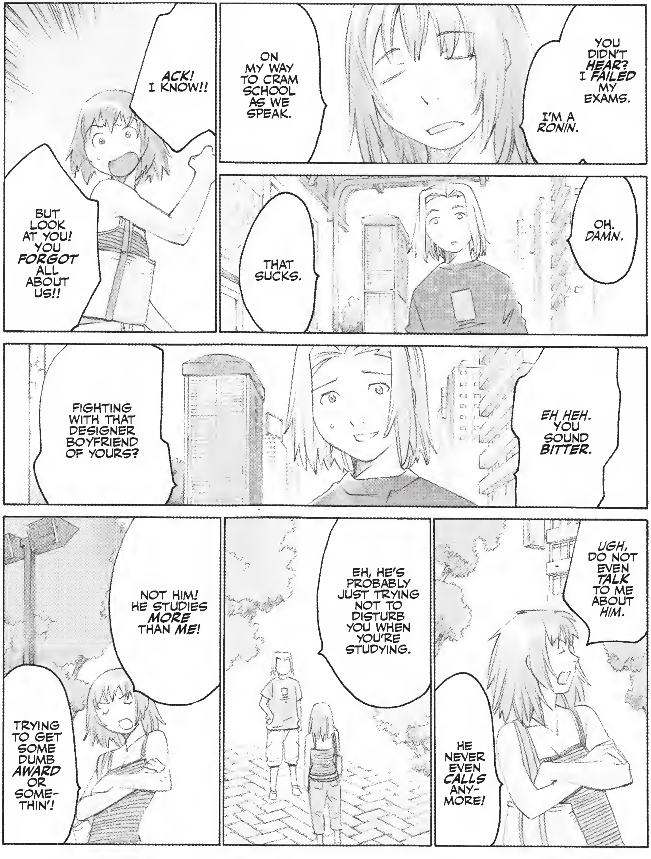

WHAT? AND I'M *NOT*?
OUCH, GIRL.
HEY NOW, I'D ***MUCH*** RATHER PLAY AROUND WITH SOMEONE LIKE ***YOU***, *KIMU*-KUN. YOU'RE ***WAY*** MORE FUN!
I'M A MESS. AND *FRANKLY*...SO ARE YOU, *KIMU*-KUN.
YEP. WE'RE JUST ALIKE IN THAT WAY.
STILL... I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELIN' THAT KID'S MEANT FOR BIGGER THINGS, YA KNOW?

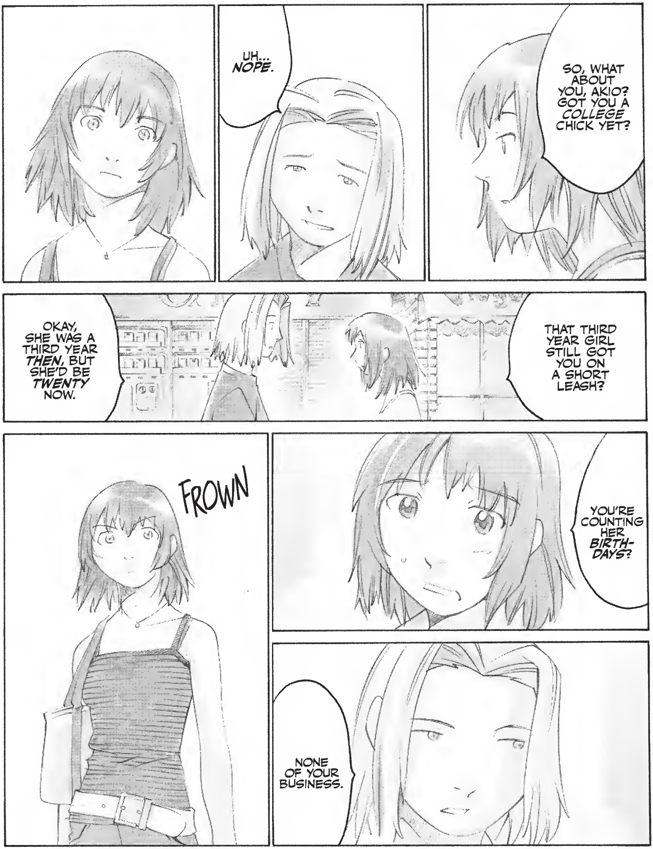

I'LL BE HONEST. *SHIRO*-KUN DOESN'T GET ME *AT ALL*.
HE TRIES NOT TO HURT ME, BUT HE'S ALWAYS SO STANDOFFISH...
AND THAT JUST HURTS ME *MORE*. AND HE CAN'T SEE IT.
HUNH.
CAN'T SAY I DO EITHER, GIRL.
HEH. I'M JUST GETTIN' IN HIS WAY.
HE DOESN'T *REALLY* NEED TO BE IN LOVE YET ANYWAY, RIGHT?

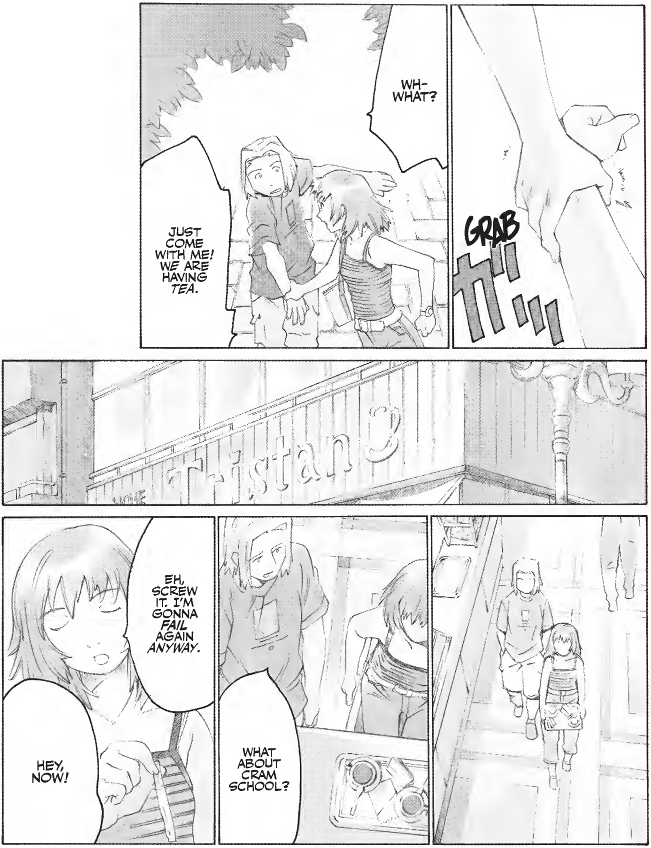

BUT THE TWO OF US DO? I MEAN, I *GUESS* SO.
FEELS LIKE I'M KINDA *INCOMPLETE* ON MY OWN, YOU KNOW?
THAT'S ***EXACTLY*** IT!
SEE, WE ***ARE*** THE SAME!

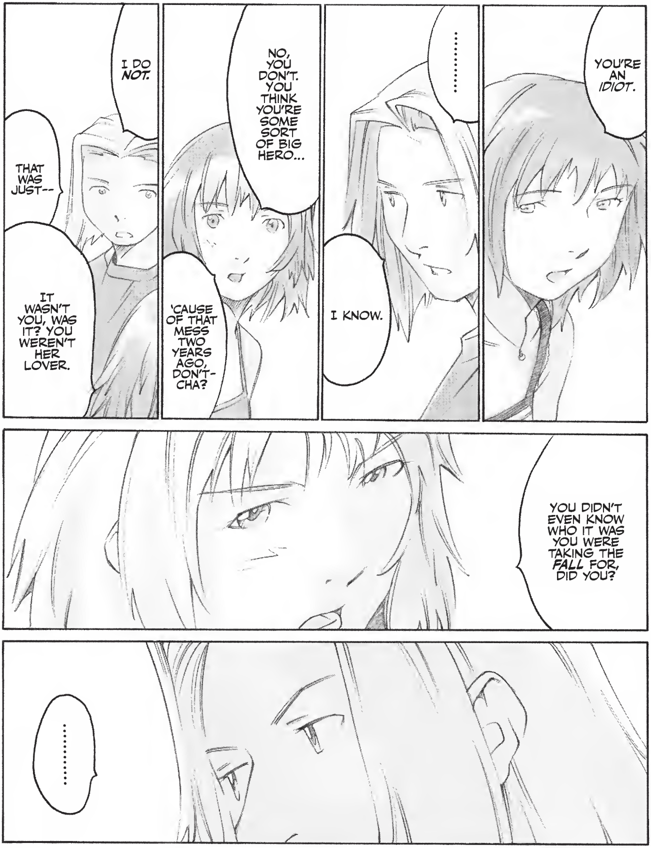

……
YOU... YOU DO *THIS* WITH TANAKA?
HMM?
WHAT DO *YOU* THINK?
WHY YOU LITTLE...!
WAH!

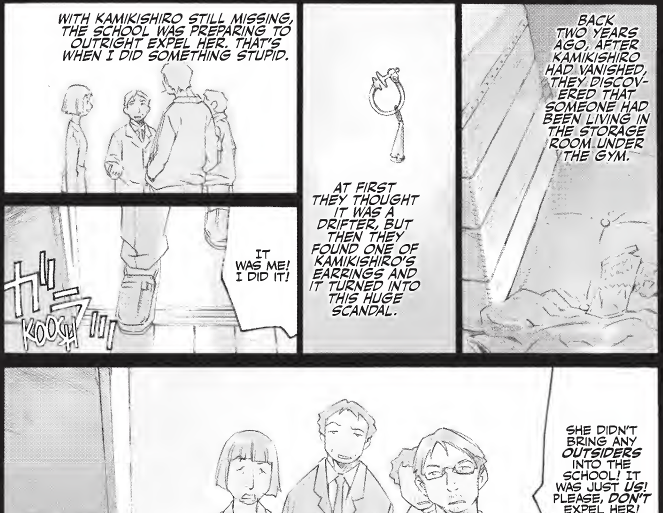

ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
I WAS PRETTY SURE THE LETTER WAS JUST SOME PRANK, BUT IT BUGGED THE HELL OUT OF ME ENOUGH THAT I SKIPPED CLASS AND HEADED BACK TO WHERE I'D GONE TO HIGH SCHOOL.
AH! AKIO! OVER HERE!
FWIP FWIP
Hey!
HEY, WHAT'S UP?
NOTHIN'. WHATCHA DOING BACK HERE?
EH, NO REASON.
YOU?

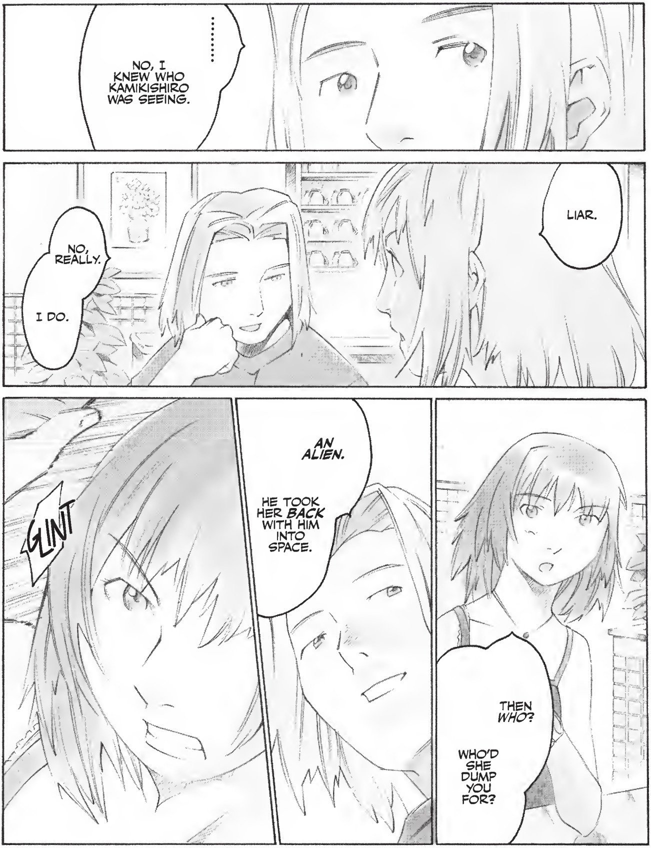

YOU DIDN'T *HEAR?* I *FAILED* MY EXAMS.
I'M A *RONIN.*
ON MY WAY TO CRAM SCHOOL AS WE SPEAK.
OH. *DAMN.*
THAT SUCKS.
ACK! I KNOW!!
BUT LOOK AT YOU! YOU *FORGOT* ALL ABOUT US!!
EH HEH. YOU SOUND *BITTER.*
FIGHTING WITH THAT DESIGNER BOYFRIEND OF YOURS?
UGH, DO NOT EVEN *TALK* TO ME ABOUT *HIM.*
HE NEVER EVEN *CALLS* ANYMORE!
EH, HE'S PROBABLY JUST TRYING NOT TO DISTURB YOU WHEN YOU'RE STUDYING.
NOT HIM! HE STUDIES *MORE* THAN *ME!*
TRYING TO GET SOME DUMB *AWARD* OR SOMETHIN'!

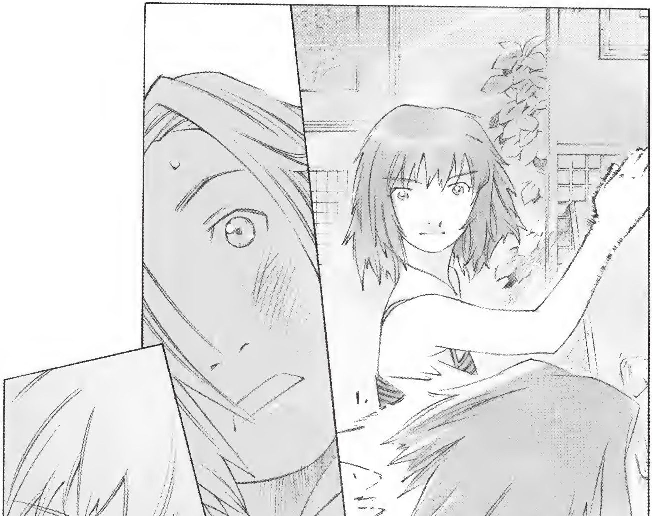

SO, WHAT ABOUT YOU, AKIO? GOT YOU A *COLLEGE* CHICK YET?
UH... *NOPE*.
THAT THIRD YEAR GIRL STILL GOT YOU ON A SHORT LEASH?
OKAY, SHE WAS A THIRD YEAR *THEN*, BUT SHE'D BE *TWENTY* NOW.
YOU'RE COUNTING HER *BIRTH-DAYS*?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
FROWN

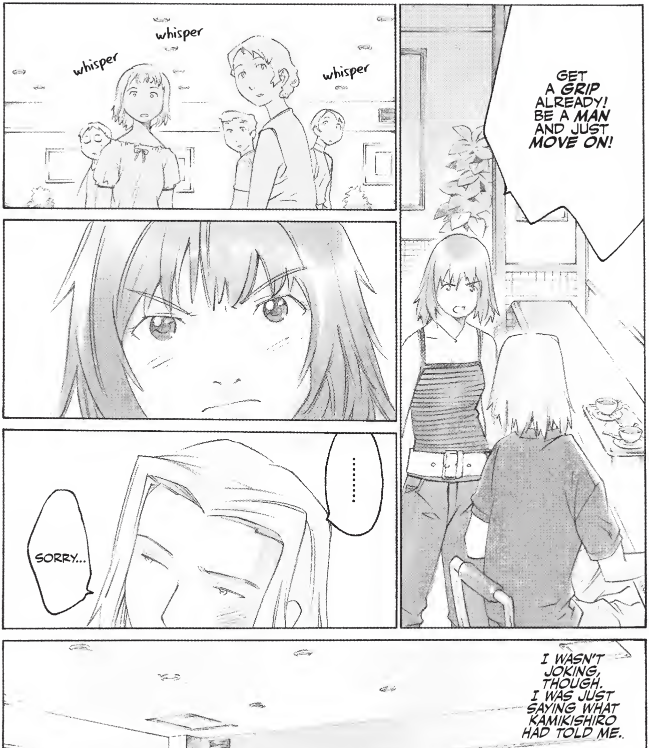

GRAB
ガッ
WH- WHAT?
JUST COME WITH ME! WE ARE HAVING TEA.
Tristan
WHAT ABOUT CRAM SCHOOL?
EH, SCREW IT. I'M GONNA FAIL AGAIN ANYWAY.
HEY, NOW!

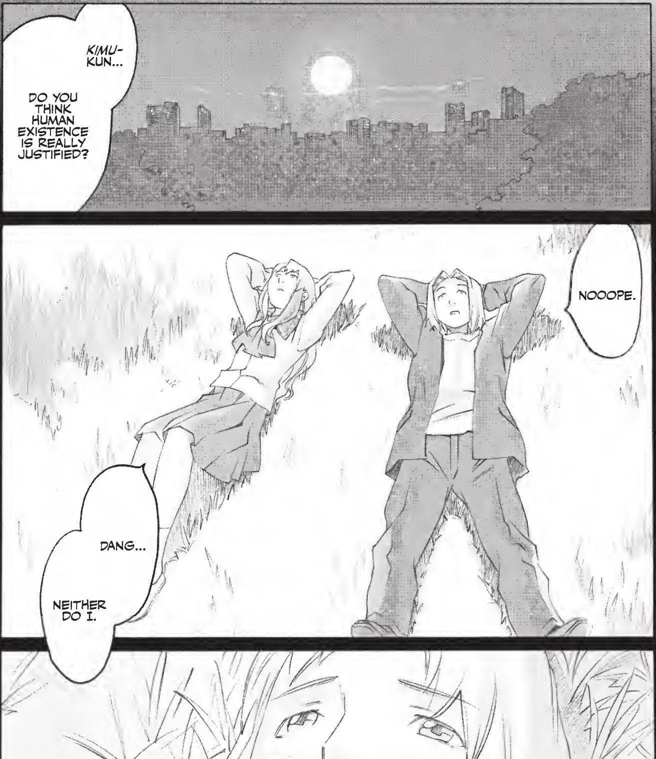

YOU'RE AN *IDIOT*.
……
I KNOW.
NO, YOU DON'T. YOU THINK YOU'RE SOME SORT OF BIG HERO...
'CAUSE OF THAT MESS TWO YEARS AGO, DON'T-CHA?
I DO ***NOT.***
THAT WAS JUST--
IT WASN'T YOU, WAS IT? YOU WEREN'T HER LOVER.
YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHO IT WAS YOU WERE TAKING THE ***FALL*** FOR, DID YOU?
……

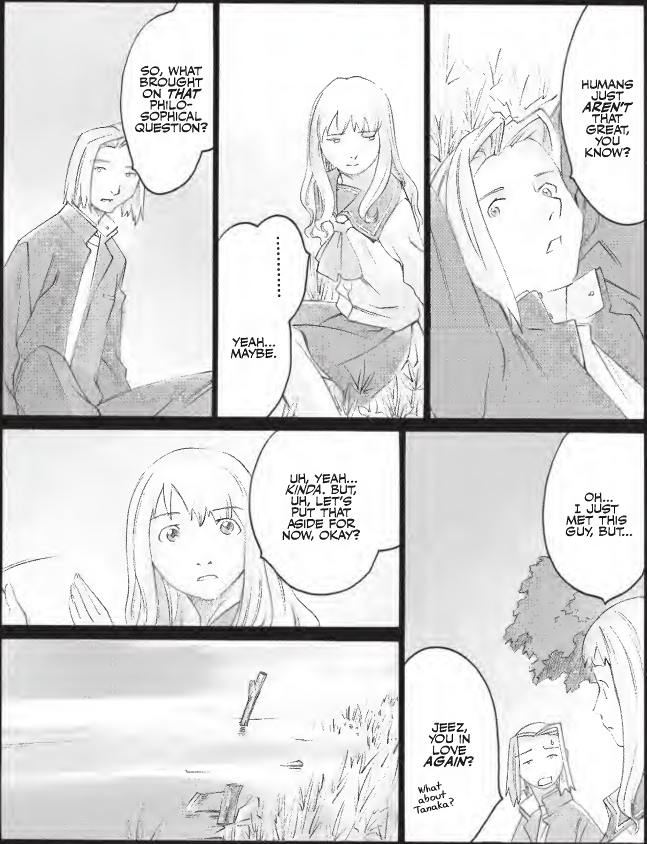

BACK TWO YEARS AGO, AFTER KAMIKISHIRO HAD VANISHED, THEY DISCOVERED THAT SOMEONE HAD BEEN LIVING IN THE STORAGE ROOM UNDER THE GYM.
AT FIRST THEY THOUGHT IT WAS A DRIFTER, BUT THEN THEY FOUND ONE OF KAMIKISHIRO'S EARRINGS AND IT TURNED INTO THIS HUGE SCANDAL.
WITH KAMIKISHIRO STILL MISSING, THE SCHOOL WAS PREPARING TO OUTRIGHT EXPEL HER. THAT'S WHEN I DID SOMETHING STUPID.
IT WAS ME! I DID IT!
ガラ
KOOSH
SHE DIDN'T BRING ANY *OUTSIDERS* INTO THE SCHOOL! IT WAS JUST *US*! PLEASE, *DON'T* EXPEL HER!
THE STAFF DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, BUT MY CLASSMATES MADE A FUSS, AND JUST TO CALM THINGS DOWN THEY SUSPENDED BOTH ME AND KAMIKISHIRO.
Tristan

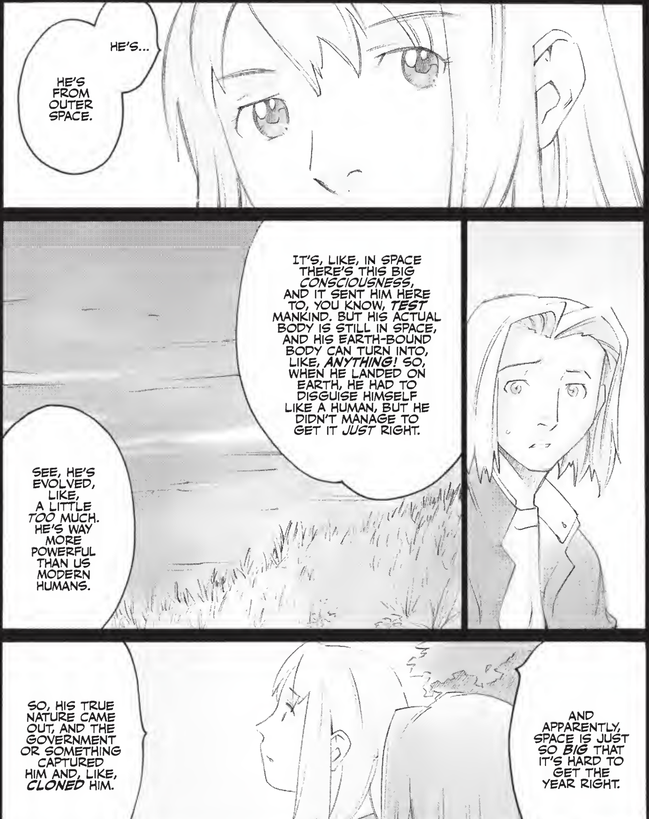

……
NO, I KNEW WHO KAMIKISHIRO WAS SEEING.
LIAR.
NO, REALLY.
I DO.
THEN *WHO*?
WHO'D SHE DUMP YOU FOR?
AN ALIEN.
HE TOOK HER *BACK* WITH HIM INTO SPACE.
GLINT

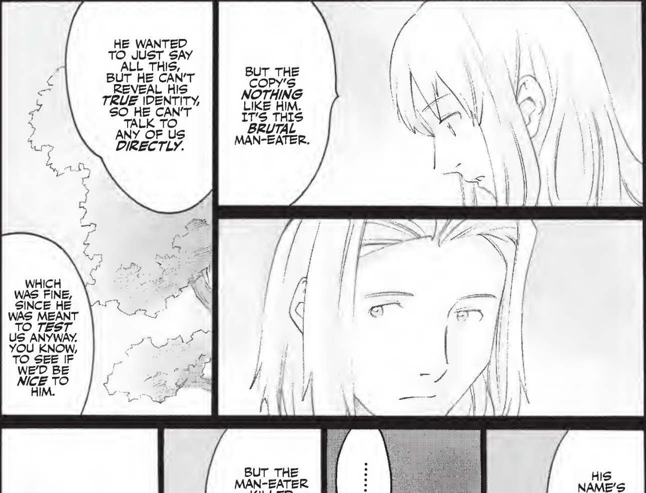

SLAP

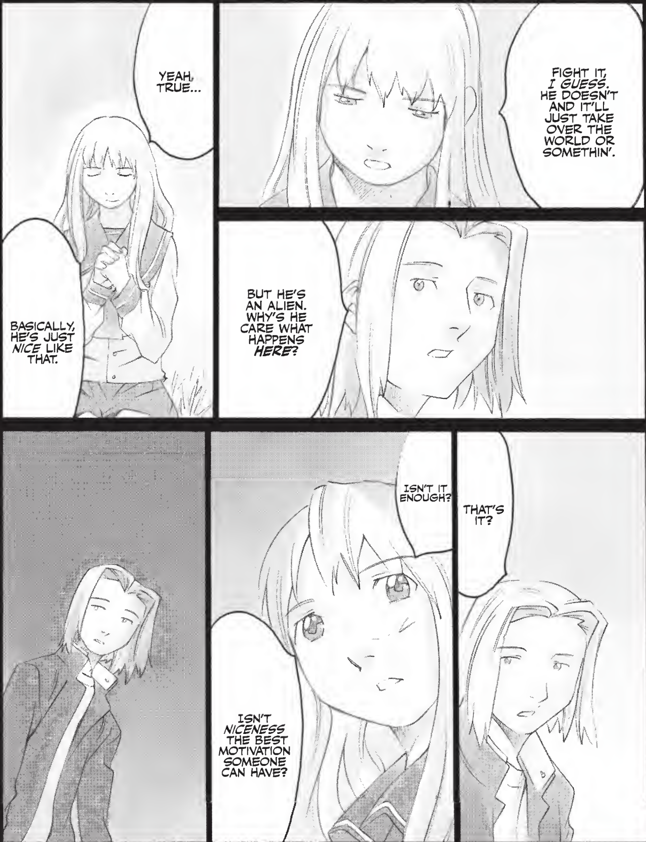

GET A GRIP ALREADY! BE A MAN AND JUST MOVE ON!
whisper
whisper
whisper
....
SORRY...
I WASN'T JOKING, THOUGH. I WAS JUST SAYING WHAT KAMIKISHIRO HAD TOLD ME.

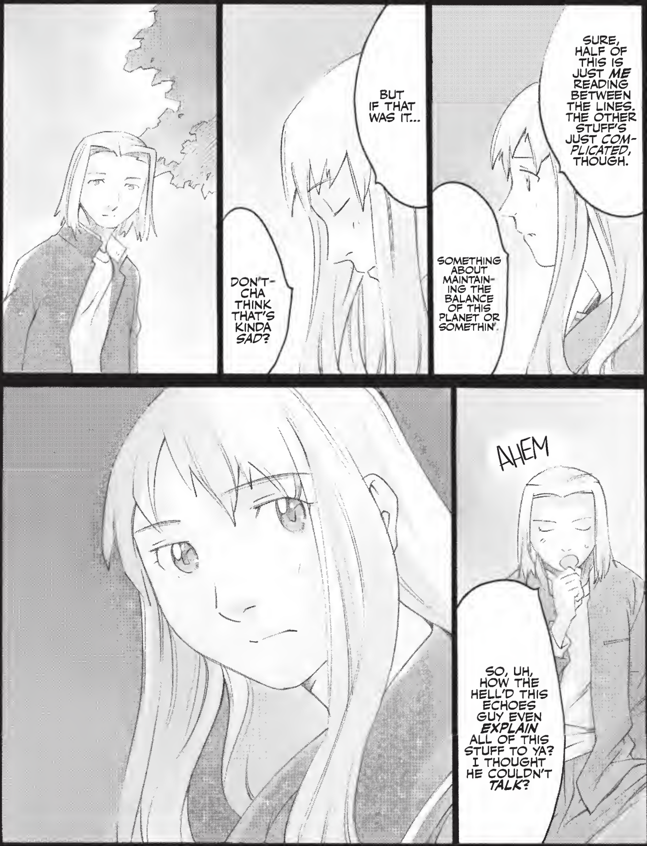

KIMU-KUN...
DO YOU THINK HUMAN EXISTENCE IS REALLY JUSTIFIED?
NOOOPE.
DANG...
NEITHER DO I.

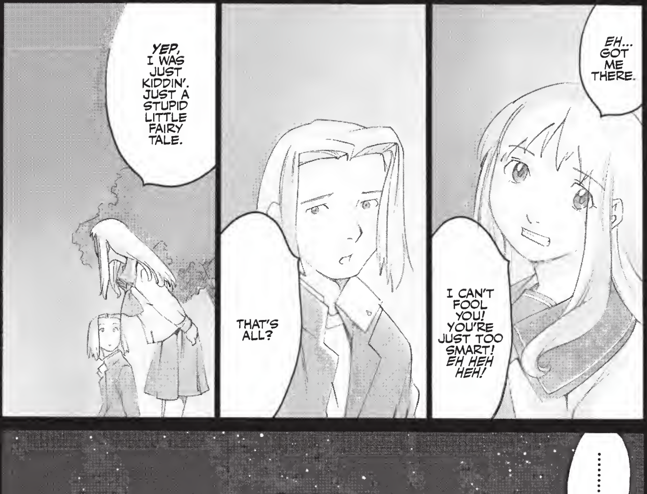

HUMANS JUST *AREN'T* THAT GREAT, YOU KNOW?
……
YEAH… MAYBE.
SO, WHAT BROUGHT ON *THAT* PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION?
OH… I JUST MET THIS GUY, BUT…
JEEZ, YOU IN LOVE *AGAIN*?
What about Tanaka?
UH, YEAH… *KINDA*. BUT, UH, LET'S PUT THAT ASIDE FOR NOW, OKAY?

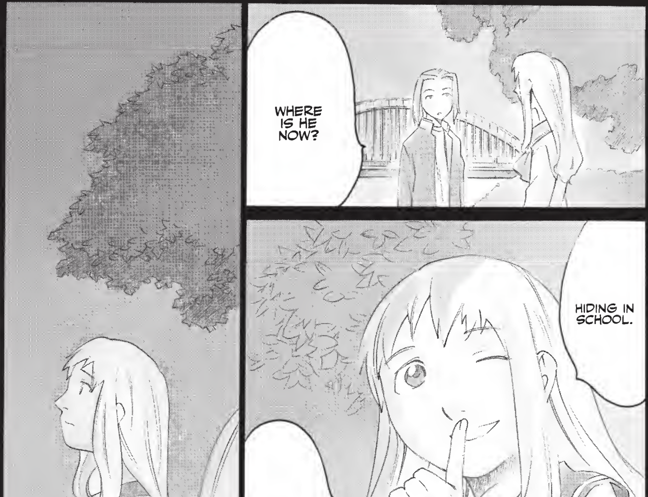

HE'S...
HE'S FROM OUTER SPACE.
IT'S, LIKE, IN SPACE THERE'S THIS BIG *CONSCIOUSNESS*, AND IT SENT HIM HERE TO, YOU KNOW, *TEST* MANKIND. BUT HIS ACTUAL BODY IS STILL IN SPACE, AND HIS EARTH-BOUND BODY CAN TURN INTO, LIKE, ***ANYTHING!*** SO, WHEN HE LANDED ON EARTH, HE HAD TO DISGUISE HIMSELF LIKE A HUMAN, BUT HE DIDN'T MANAGE TO GET IT *JUST* RIGHT.
SEE, HE'S EVOLVED, LIKE, A LITTLE *TOO* MUCH. HE'S WAY MORE POWERFUL THAN US MODERN HUMANS.
SO, HIS TRUE NATURE CAME OUT, AND THE GOVERNMENT OR SOMETHING CAPTURED HIM AND, LIKE, ***CLONED*** HIM.
AND APPARENTLY, SPACE IS JUST SO *BIG* THAT IT'S HARD TO GET THE YEAR RIGHT.

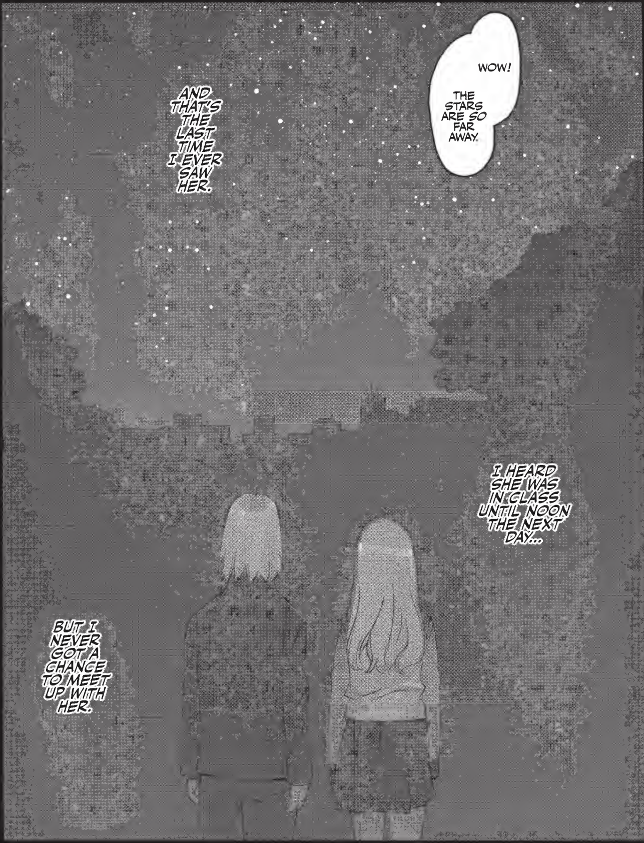

BUT THE COPY'S *NOTHING* LIKE HIM. IT'S THIS *BRUTAL* MAN-EATER.
HE WANTED TO JUST SAY ALL THIS, BUT HE CAN'T REVEAL HIS *TRUE* IDENTITY, SO HE CAN'T TALK TO ANY OF US *DIRECTLY*.
WHICH WAS FINE, SINCE HE WAS MEANT TO *TEST* US ANYWAY. YOU KNOW, TO SEE IF WE'D BE *NICE* TO HIM.
HIS NAME'S ECHOES, BY THE WAY. SINCE THAT'S ALL HE CAN DO...
KIND OF FITTING SINCE HE CAN ONLY *REFLECT* BACK STUFF PEOPLE SAY TO HIM.
......
BUT THE MAN-EATER KILLED EVERYONE AT THAT FACILITY, AND NOW IT'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.
ECHOES WENT AFTER IT...AND THAT'S WHEN HE MET ME.
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO IF HE *CATCHES* IT?


FIGHT IT, *I GUESS*. HE DOESN'T AND IT'LL JUST TAKE OVER THE WORLD OR SOMETHIN'.
BUT HE'S AN ALIEN. WHY'S HE CARE WHAT HAPPENS *HERE*?
YEAH, TRUE...
BASICALLY, HE'S JUST *NICE* LIKE THAT.
THAT'S IT?
ISN'T IT ENOUGH?
ISN'T *NICENESS* THE BEST MOTIVATION SOMEONE CAN HAVE?

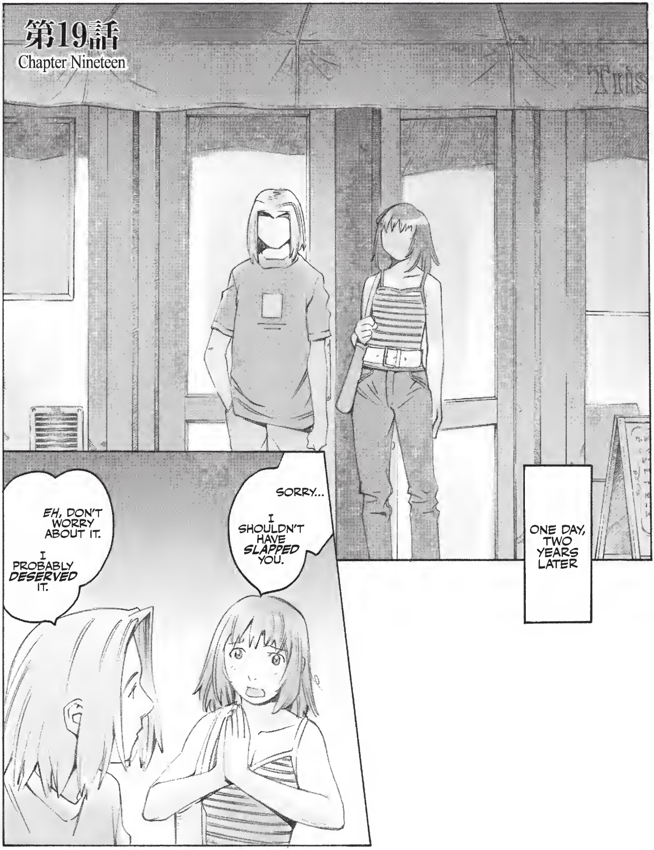

SURE, HALF OF THIS IS JUST *ME* READING BETWEEN THE LINES. THE OTHER STUFF'S JUST *COMPLICATED*, THOUGH.
SOMETHING ABOUT MAINTAINING THE BALANCE OF THIS PLANET OR SOMETHIN'.
BUT IF THAT WAS IT...
DON'TCHA THINK THAT'S KINDA *SAD*?
AHEM
SO, UH, HOW THE HELL'D THIS ECHOES GUY EVEN ***EXPLAIN*** ALL OF THIS STUFF TO YA? I THOUGHT HE COULDN'T *TALK*?

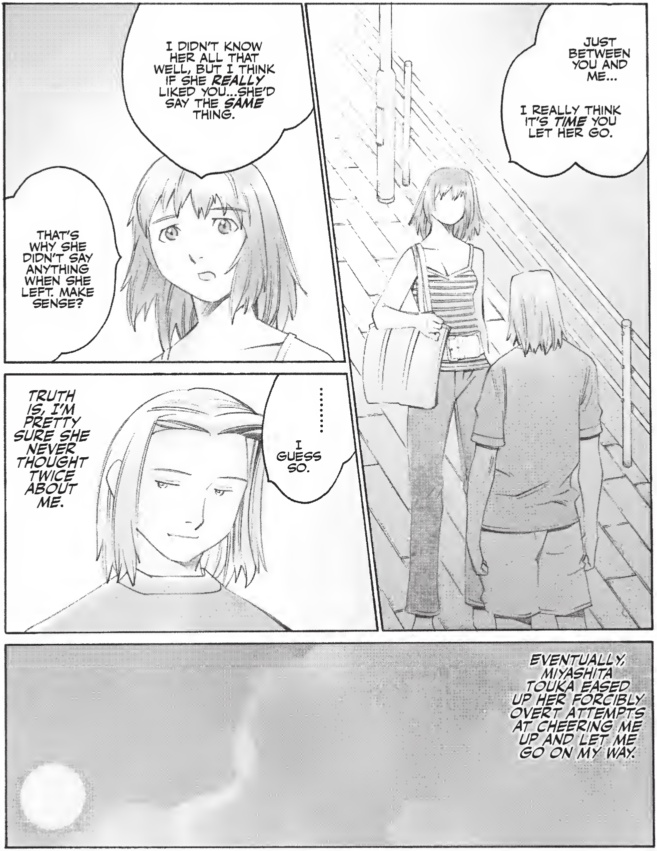

YEP, I WAS JUST KIDDIN'. JUST A STUPID LITTLE FAIRY TALE.
THAT'S ALL?
EH... GOT ME THERE.
I CAN'T FOOL YOU! YOU'RE JUST TOO SMART! EH HEH HEH!
....
BUT IF ECHOES WINS...HE'LL PROBABLY GET TO GO BACK TO HIS HOME IN THE STARS.

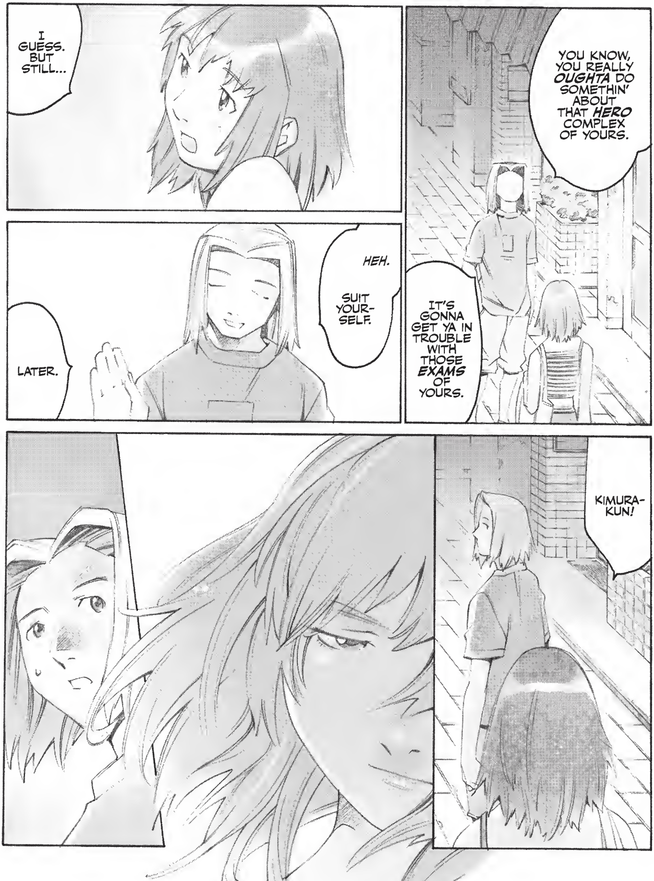

WHERE IS HE NOW?
HIDING IN SCHOOL.
SHHH! DON'T TELL ANYONE.
HEH HEH!
DON'T WORRY... I *WON'T*.

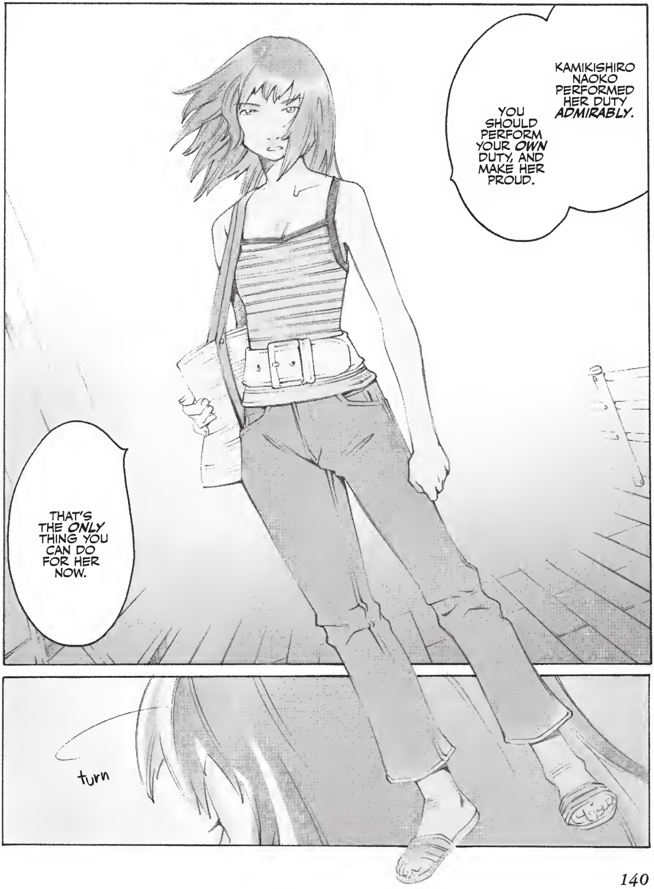
WOW!
THE STARS ARE SO FAR AWAY.
AND THAT'S THE LAST TIME I EVER SAW HER.
I HEARD SHE WAS IN CLASS UNTIL NOON THE NEXT DAY...
BUT I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO MEET UP WITH HER.

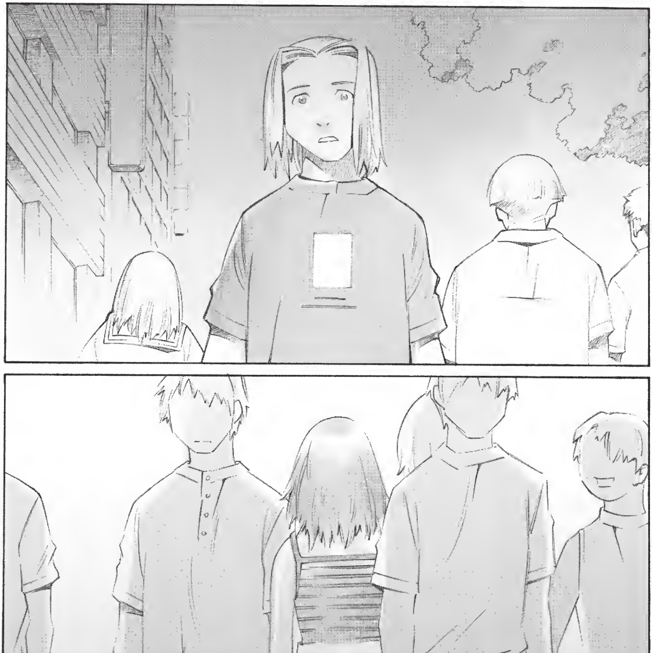
第19話
Chapter Nineteen

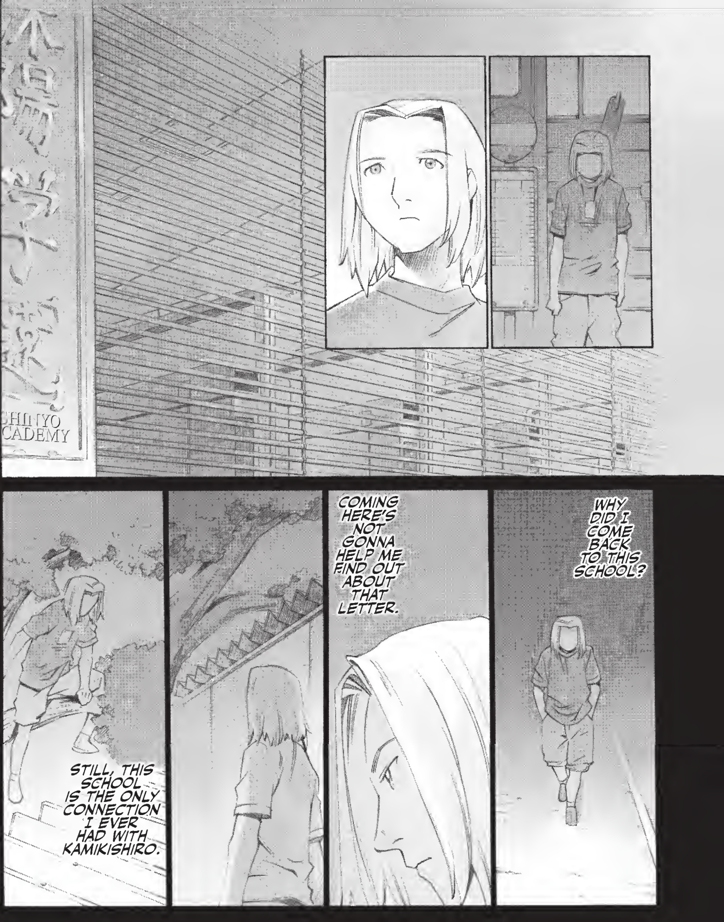

Tris
ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
SORRY... I SHOULDN'T HAVE SLAPPED YOU.
EH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I PROBABLY DESERVED IT.

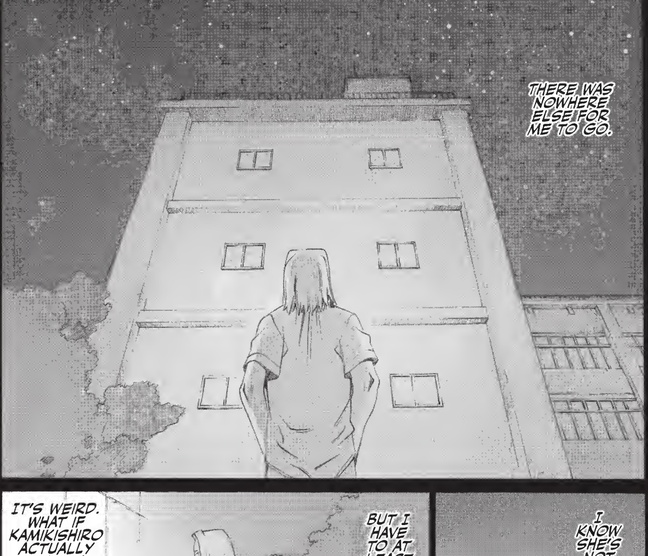

JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME...
I REALLY THINK IT'S *TIME* YOU LET HER GO.
I DIDN'T KNOW HER ALL THAT WELL, BUT I THINK IF SHE *REALLY* LIKED YOU...SHE'D SAY THE *SAME* THING.
THAT'S WHY SHE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING WHEN SHE LEFT. MAKE SENSE?
....
I GUESS SO.
TRUTH IS, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE NEVER THOUGHT TWICE ABOUT ME.
EVENTUALLY, MIYASHITA TOUKA EASED UP HER FORCIBLY OVERT ATTEMPTS AT CHEERING ME UP AND LET ME GO ON MY WAY.

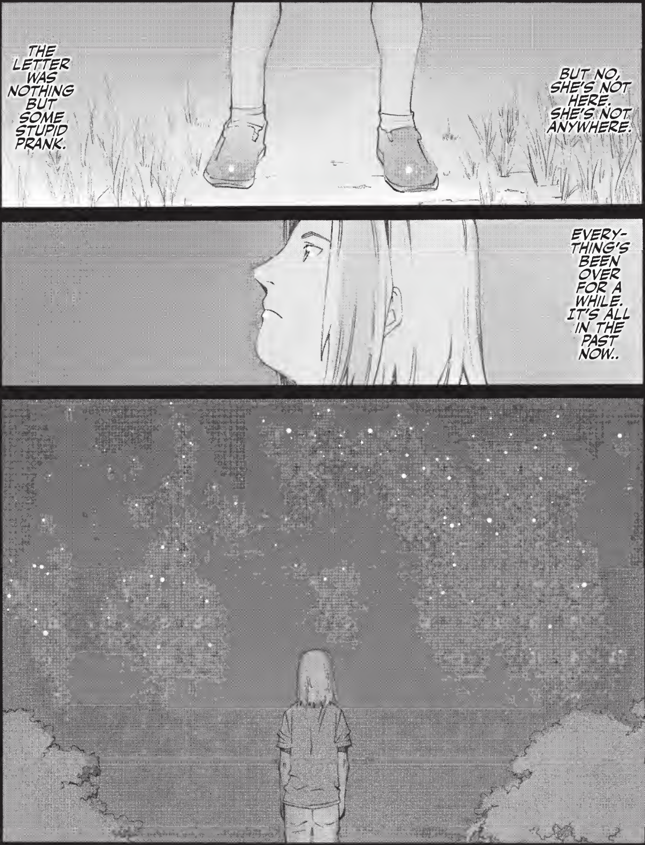

YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY *OUGHTA* DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT THAT *HERO* COMPLEX OF YOURS.
I GUESS. BUT STILL...
IT'S GONNA GET YA IN TROUBLE WITH THOSE *EXAMS* OF YOURS.
HEH.
SUIT YOURSELF.
LATER.
KIMURA-KUN!

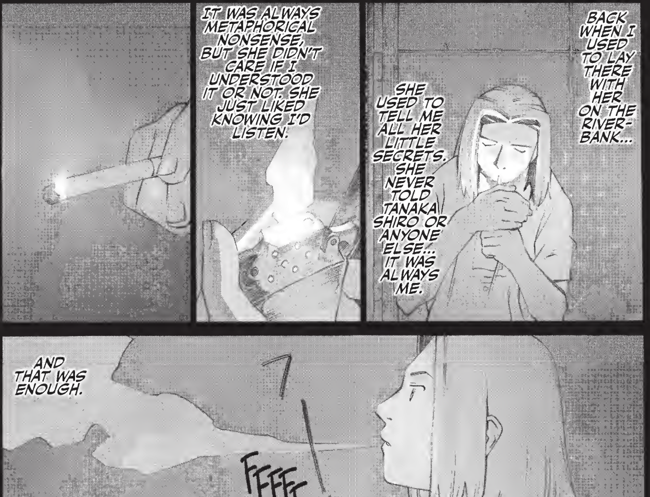

KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO PERFORMED HER DUTY *ADMIRABLY*.
YOU SHOULD PERFORM YOUR *OWN* DUTY, AND MAKE HER PROUD.
THAT'S THE *ONLY* THING YOU CAN DO FOR HER NOW.
turn

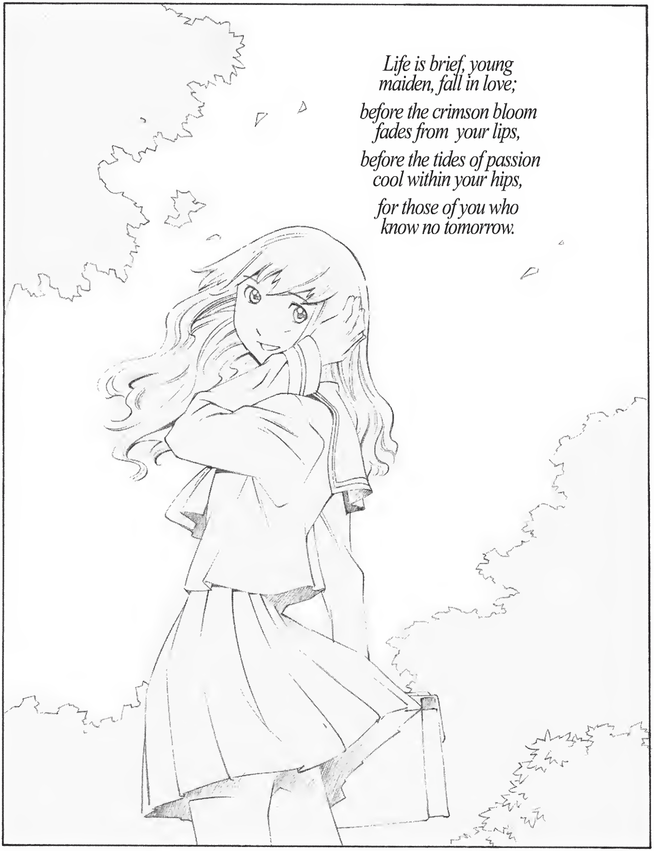

WHAT...
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

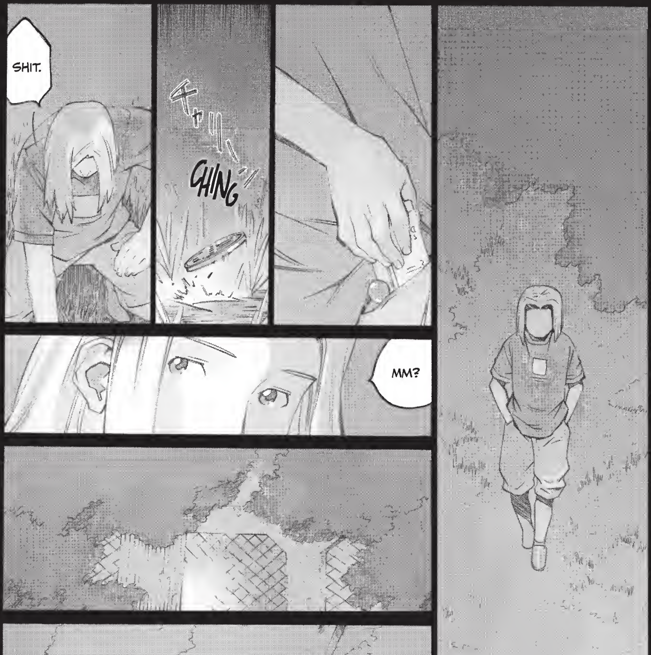

SHINYO
CADEMY
WHY DID I COME BACK TO THIS SCHOOL?
COMING HERE'S NOT GONNA HELP ME FIND OUT ABOUT THAT LETTER.
STILL, THIS SCHOOL IS THE ONLY CONNECTION I EVER HAD WITH KAMIKISHIRO.

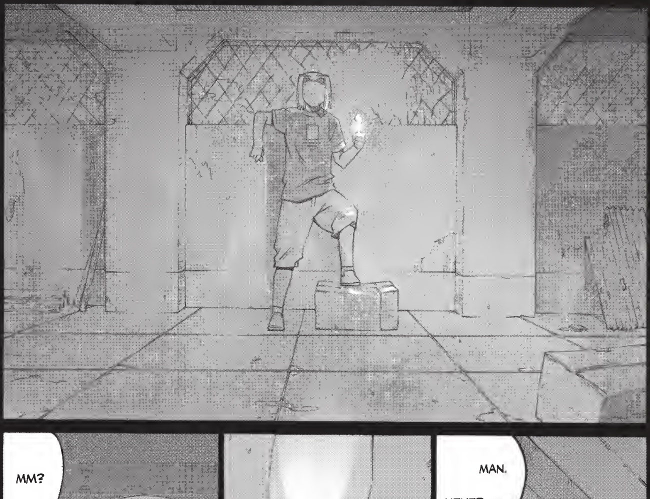

THERE WAS NOWHERE ELSE FOR ME TO GO.
I KNOW SHE'S NOT HERE.
BUT I HAVE TO AT LEAST LOOK.
IT'S WEIRD. WHAT IF KAMIKISHIRO ACTUALLY SENT THE LETTER HERSELF?
AND NOW THAT I'VE COME BACK TO TOWN... I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE HER AGAIN.
IT'LL BE JUST LIKE IN ONE OF THOSE MOVIES.

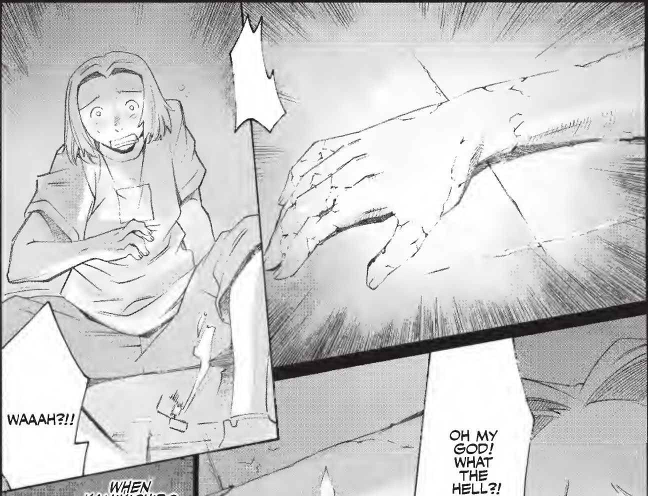

THE LETTER WAS NOTHING BUT SOME STUPID PRANK.
BUT NO, SHE'S NOT HERE. SHE'S NOT ANYWHERE.
EVERYTHING'S BEEN OVER FOR A WHILE. IT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW..

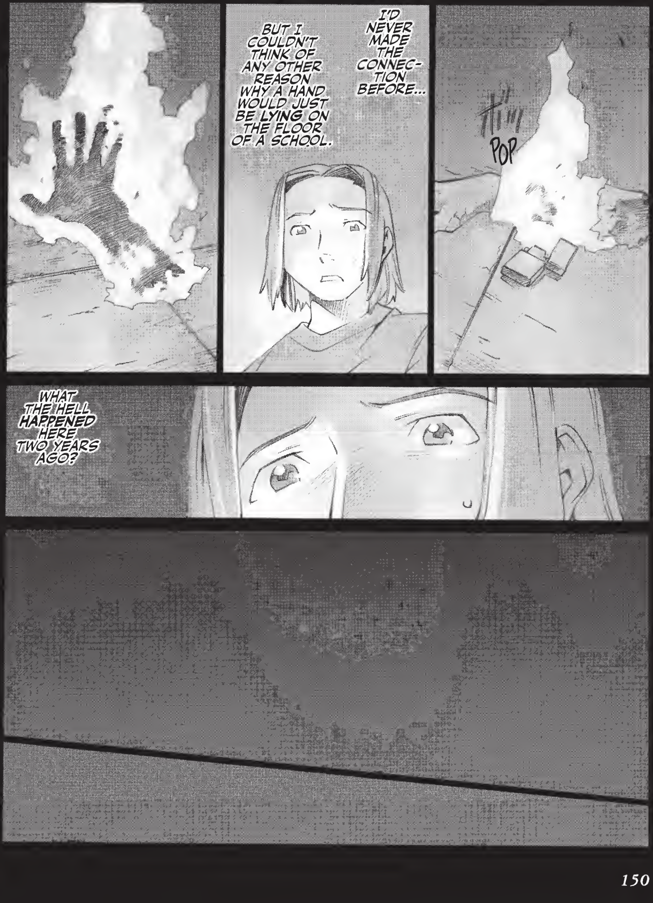

BACK WHEN I USED TO LAY THERE WITH HER ON THE RIVERBANK...
SHE USED TO TELL ME ALL HER LITTLE SECRETS. SHE NEVER TOLD TANAKA SHIRO OR ANYONE ELSE... IT WAS ALWAYS ME.
IT WAS ALWAYS METAPHORICAL NONSENSE, BUT SHE DIDN'T CARE IF I UNDERSTOOD IT OR NOT. SHE JUST LIKED KNOWING I'D LISTEN.
FFFFF
AND THAT WAS ENOUGH.
THAT'S ALL THE REASON I NEEDED TO KNOW IN MY HEART THAT I COULD LOVE HER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I LIKE SOME OTHER GIRL, IT'LL ALWAYS BE CRAZY AND LOVABLE LITTLE KAMIKISHIRO THAT I'LL ALWAYS BE COMPARING THEM TO. SHE'S JUST THAT UNFORGETTABLE.

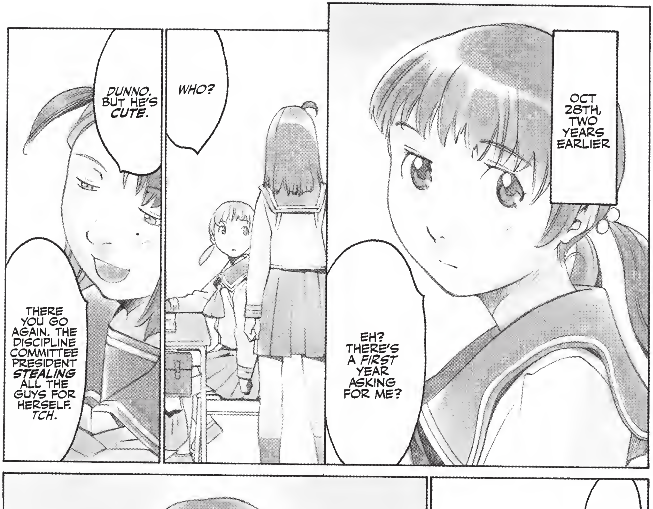

Life is brief, young maiden, fall in love;
before the crimson bloom fades from your lips,
before the tides of passion cool within your hips,
for those of you who know no tomorrow.

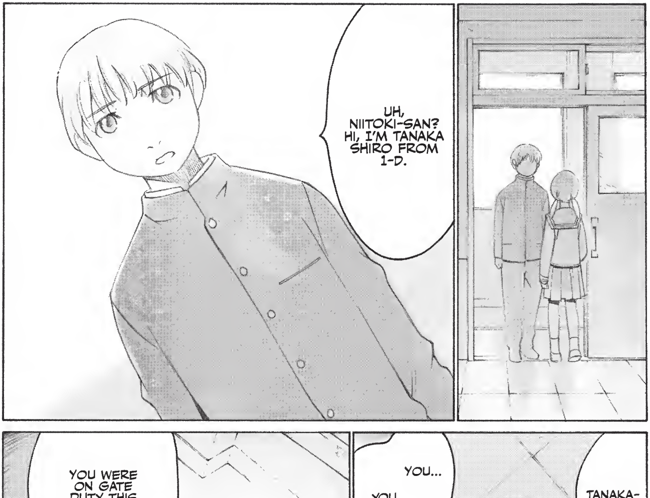

ギャリ
CHING
SHIT.
MM?

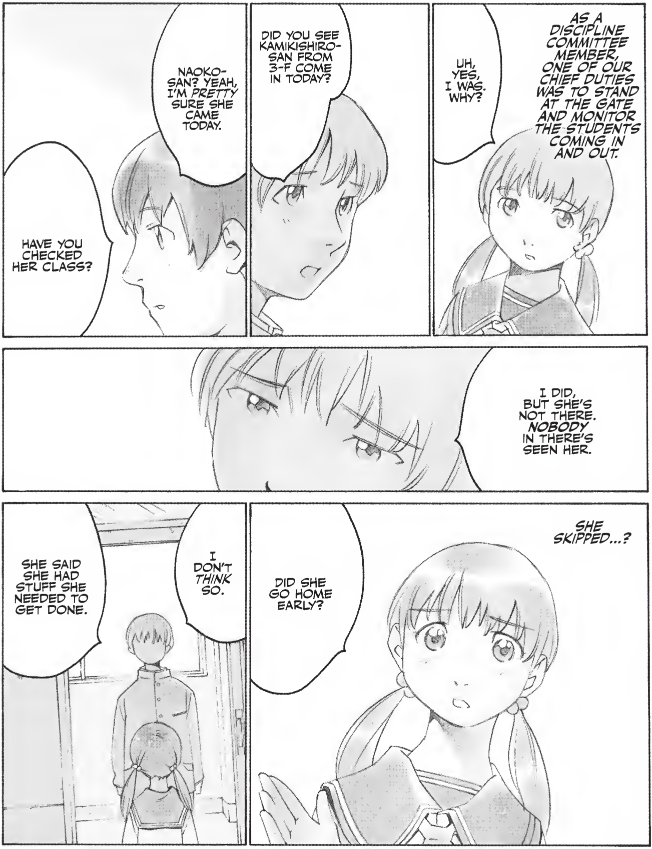

MAN.
NEVER KNEW THIS WAS HERE...
カサ…
RUSTLE
MM?

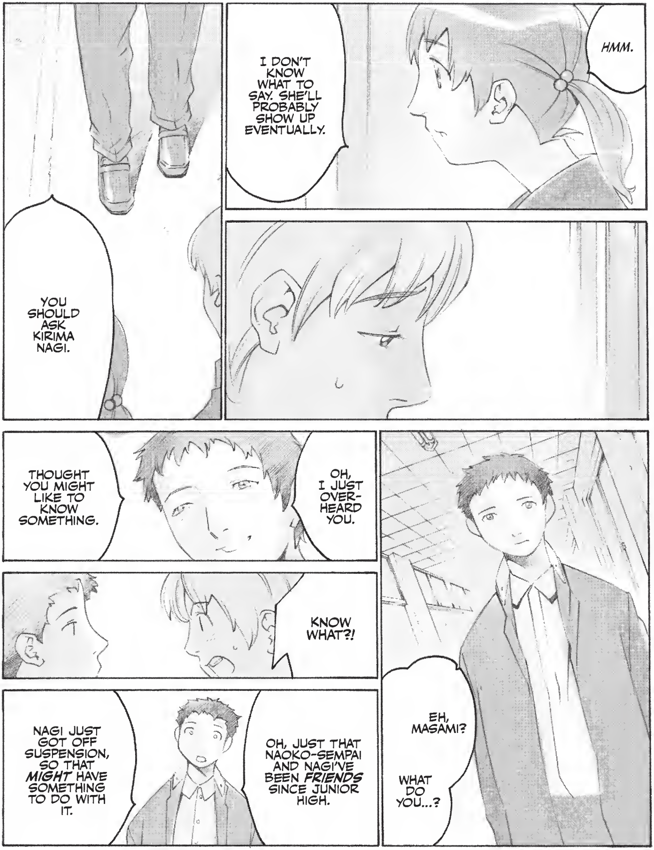

WAAAH?!!
OH MY GOD! WHAT THE HELL?!
CRACKLE
WHEN KAMIKISHIRO HAD VANISHED, SHE WASN'T THE ONLY ONE. A NUMBER OF OTHER GIRLS HAD GONE MISSING AROUND THE SAME TIME.

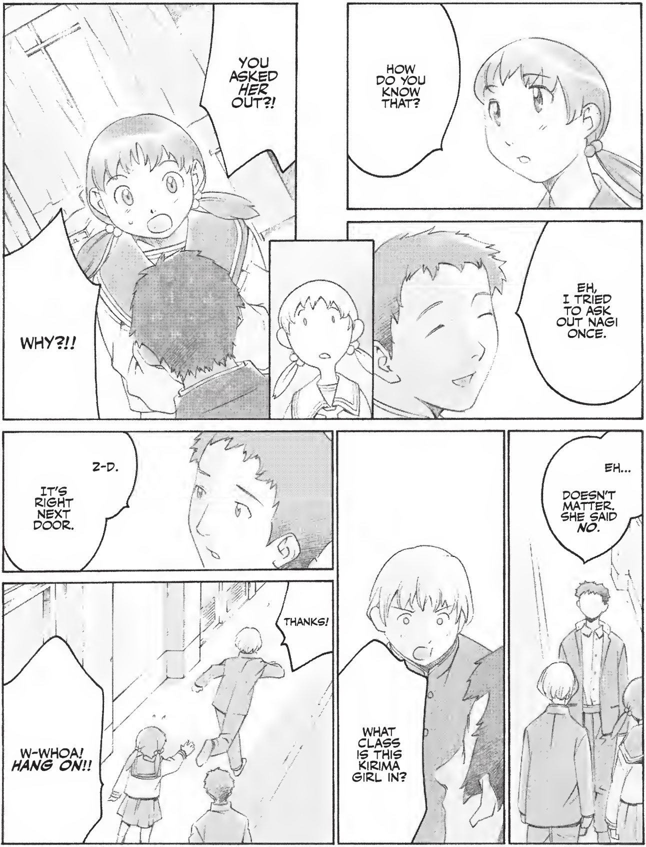

POP
I'D NEVER MADE THE CONNECTION BEFORE...
BUT I COULDN'T THINK OF ANY OTHER REASON WHY A HAND WOULD JUST BE **LYING** ON THE FLOOR OF A SCHOOL..
WHAT THE HELL **HAPPENED** HERE TWO YEARS AGO?

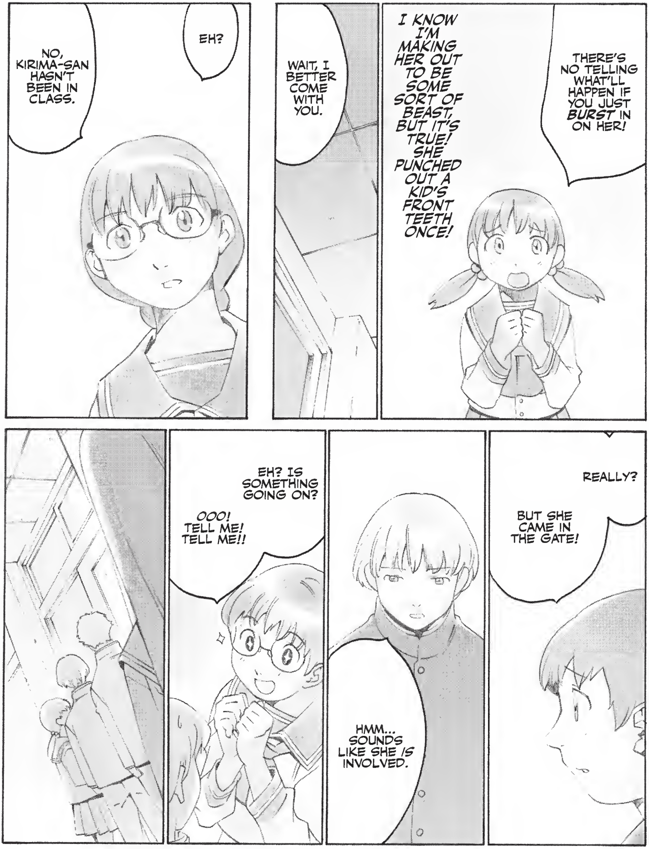

OCT 28TH, TWO YEARS EARLIER
EH? THERE'S A *FIRST* YEAR ASKING FOR ME?
WHO?
DUNNO. BUT HE'S *CUTE*.
THERE YOU GO AGAIN. THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT ***STEALING*** ALL THE GUYS FOR HERSELF. *TCH*.
ANYWAY, LATER!
blush
HONESTLY...

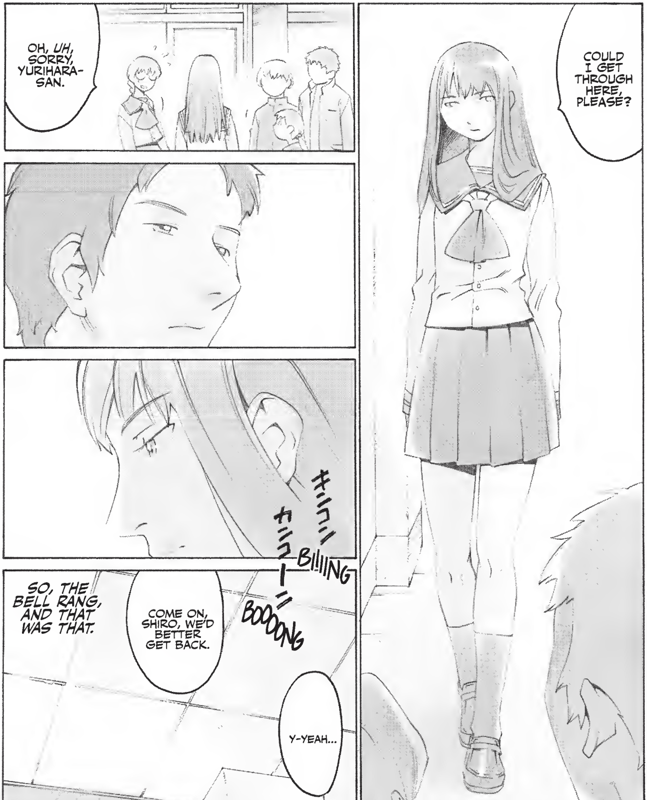

UH, NIITOKI-SAN? HI, I'M TANAKA SHIRO FROM 1-D.
TANAKA-KUN?
YOU... YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
YOU WERE ON GATE DUTY THIS MORNING, WEREN'T YOU?

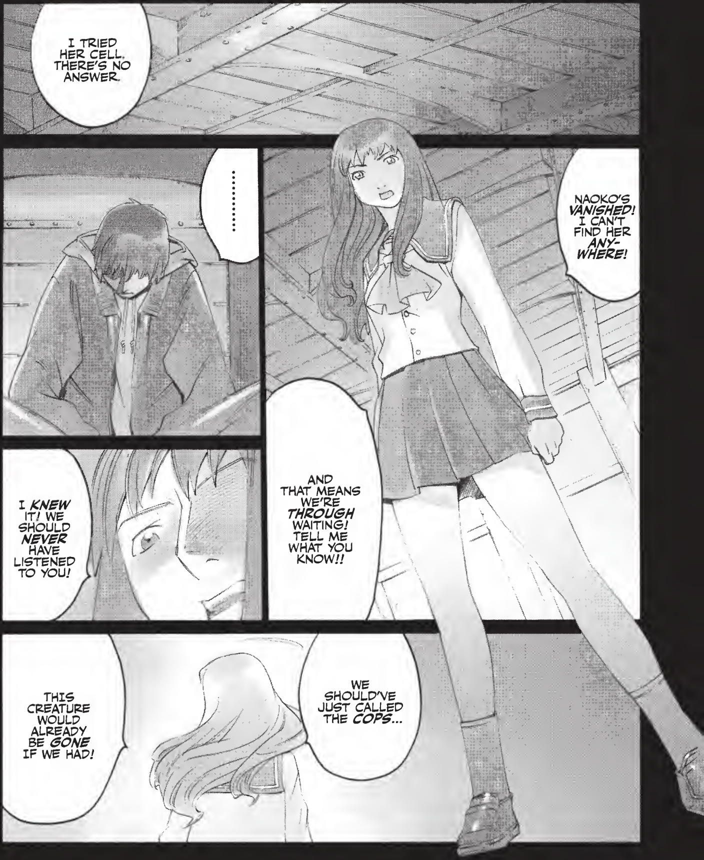

AS A DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE MEMBER, ONE OF OUR CHIEF DUTIES WAS TO STAND AT THE GATE AND MONITOR THE STUDENTS COMING IN AND OUT.
UH, YES, I WAS. WHY?
DID YOU SEE KAMIKISHIRO-SAN FROM 3-F COME IN TODAY?
NAOKO-SAN? YEAH, I'M *PRETTY* SURE SHE CAME TODAY.
HAVE YOU CHECKED HER CLASS?
I DID, BUT SHE'S NOT THERE. *NOBODY* IN THERE'S SEEN HER.
SHE SKIPPED...?
DID SHE GO HOME EARLY?
I DON'T *THINK* SO.
SHE SAID SHE HAD STUFF SHE NEEDED TO GET DONE.

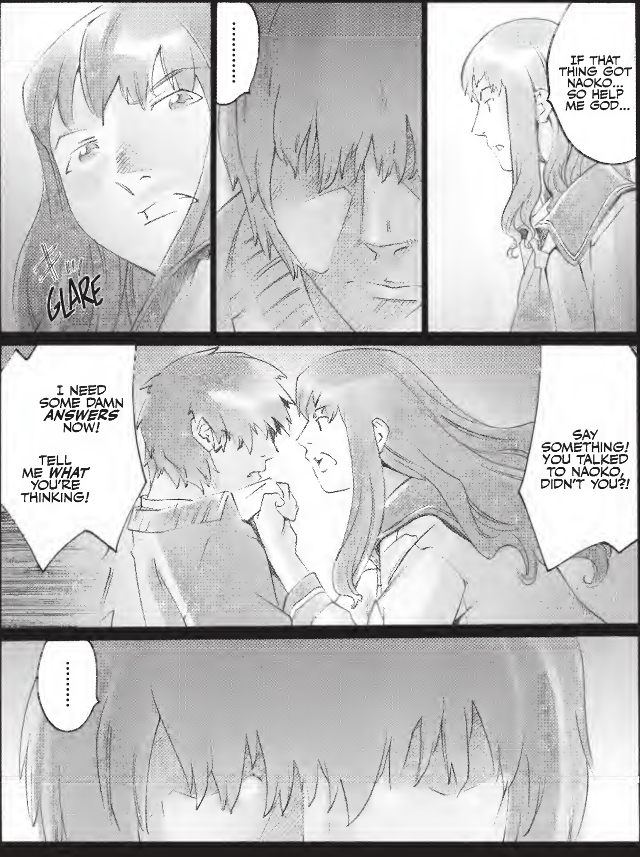

HMM.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. SHE'LL PROBABLY SHOW UP EVENTUALLY.
YOU SHOULD ASK KIRIMA NAGI.
EH, MASAMI?
WHAT DO YOU...?
OH, I JUST OVERHEARD YOU.
THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING.
KNOW WHAT?!
OH, JUST THAT NAOKO-SEMPAI AND NAGI'VE BEEN *FRIENDS* SINCE JUNIOR HIGH.
NAGI JUST GOT OFF SUSPENSION, SO THAT *MIGHT* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

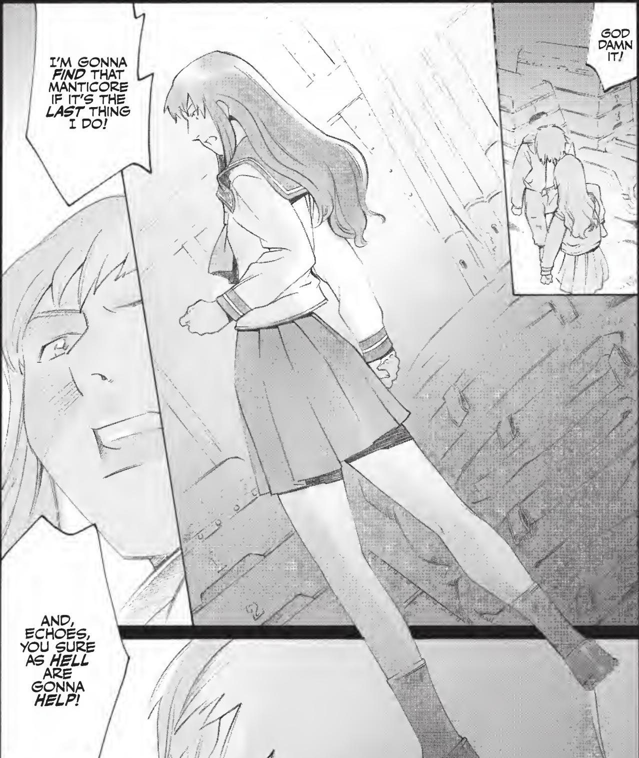

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?
EH, I TRIED TO ASK OUT NAGI ONCE.
YOU ASKED *HER* OUT?!
WHY?!!
EH... DOESN'T MATTER. SHE SAID *NO*.
WHAT CLASS IS THIS KIRIMA GIRL IN?
Z-D.
IT'S RIGHT NEXT DOOR.
THANKS!
W-WHOA! *HANG ON!!*


THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF YOU JUST BURST IN ON HER!
I KNOW I'M MAKING HER OUT TO BE SOME SORT OF BEAST, BUT IT'S TRUE! SHE PUNCHED OUT A KID'S FRONT TEETH ONCE!
WAIT, I BETTER COME WITH YOU.
EH?
NO, KIRIMA-SAN HASN'T BEEN IN CLASS.
REALLY?
BUT SHE CAME IN THE GATE!
HMM... SOUNDS LIKE SHE IS INVOLVED.
EH? IS SOMETHING GOING ON?
OOO! TELL ME! TELL ME!!

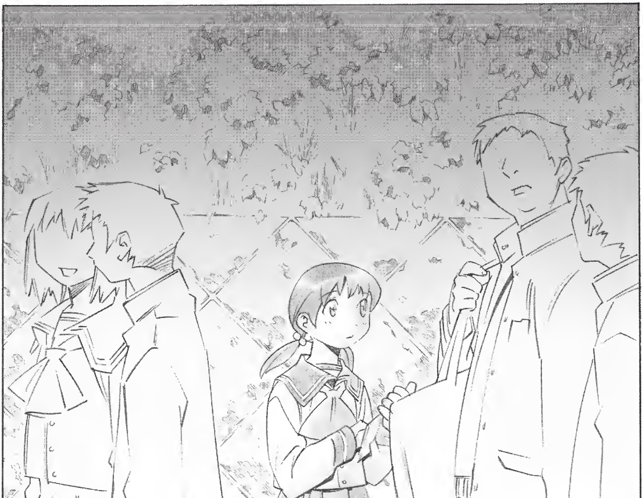

COULD I GET THROUGH HERE, PLEASE?
OH, *UH*, SORRY, YURIHARA-SAN.
キンコン
カンコーン
BIIIING
BOOOONG
COME ON, SHIRO, WE'D BETTER GET BACK.
SO, THE BELL RANG, AND THAT WAS THAT.
Y-YEAH...

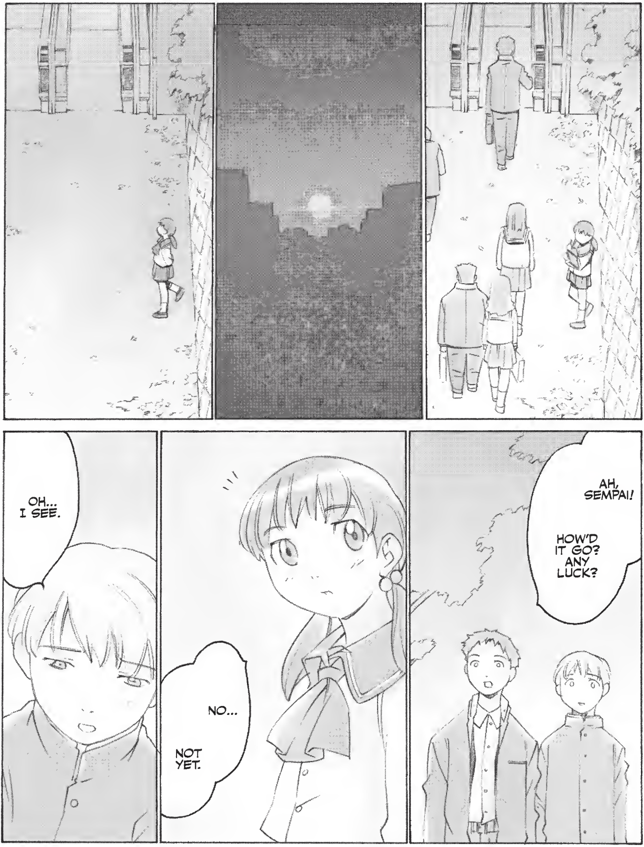

I TRIED HER CELL. THERE'S NO ANSWER.
....
NAOKO'S *VANISHED!* I CAN'T FIND HER *ANYWHERE!*
I *KNEW* IT! WE SHOULD *NEVER* HAVE LISTENED TO YOU!
AND THAT MEANS WE'RE *THROUGH* WAITING! TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!!
WE SHOULD'VE JUST CALLED THE *COPS*...
THIS CREATURE WOULD ALREADY BE *GONE* IF WE HAD!

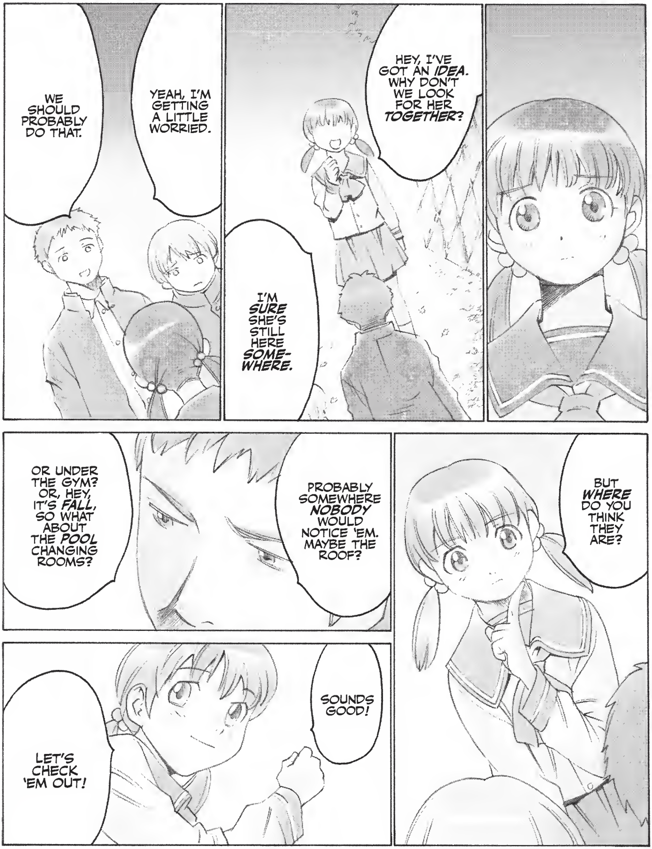

IF THAT THING GOT NAOKO... SO HELP ME GOD...
......
GLARE
SAY SOMETHING! YOU TALKED TO NAOKO, DIDN'T YOU?!
I NEED SOME DAMN ANSWERS NOW!
TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE THINKING!
......

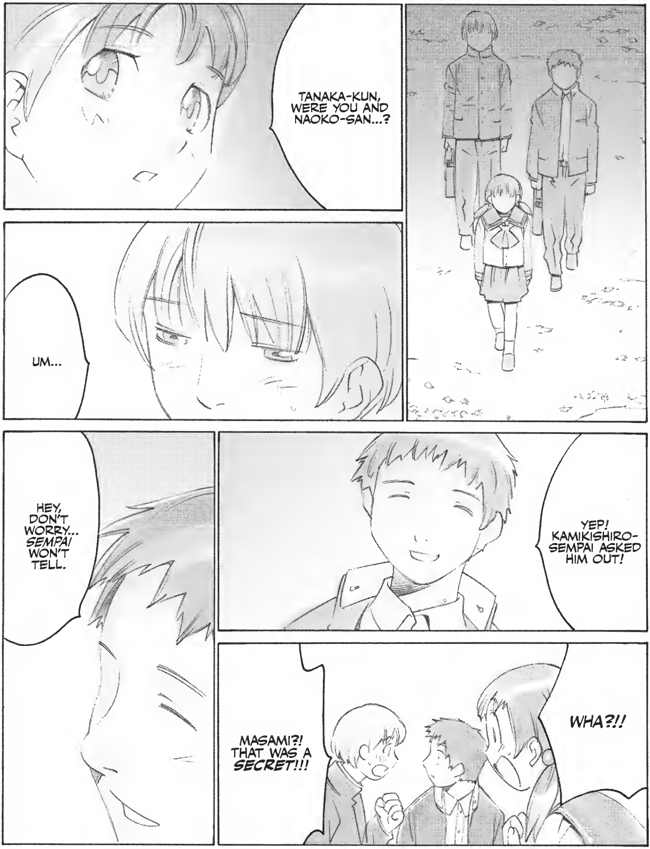

GOD DAMN IT!
I'M GONNA FIND THAT MANTICORE IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!
AND, ECHOES, YOU SURE AS HELL ARE GONNA HELP!

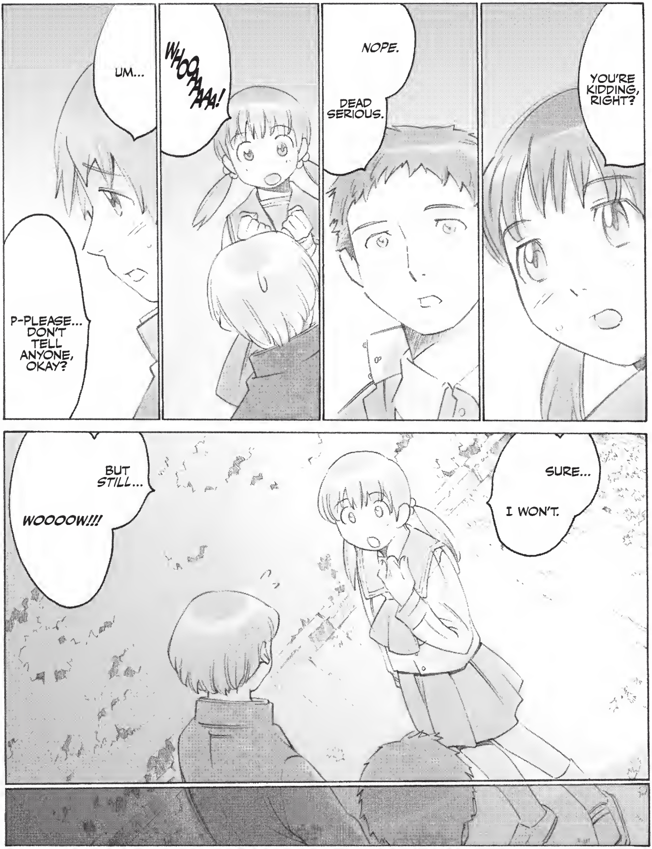
Chapter Twenty
第20話

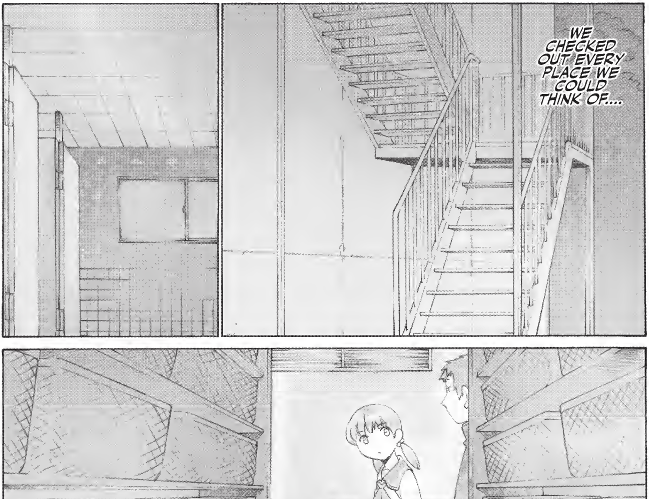

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS, BUT IT BUGGED ME SO MUCH...
...THAT I VOLUNTARILY AGREED TO COVER GATE DUTY THAT DAY AFTER SCHOOL.

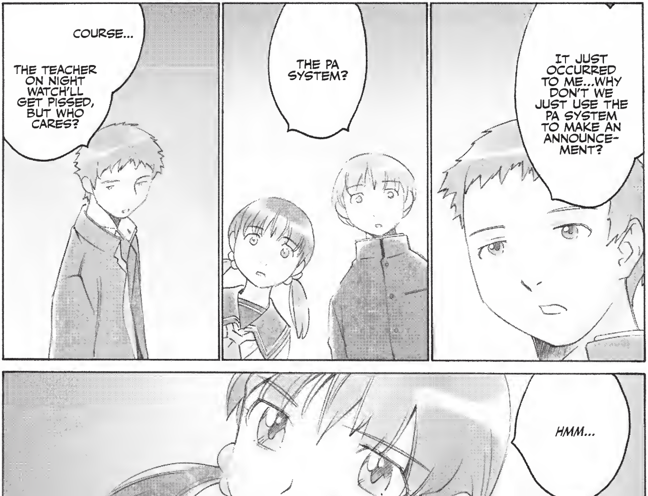

AH, SEMPAI!
HOW'D IT GO? ANY LUCK?
NO... NOT YET.
OH... I SEE.

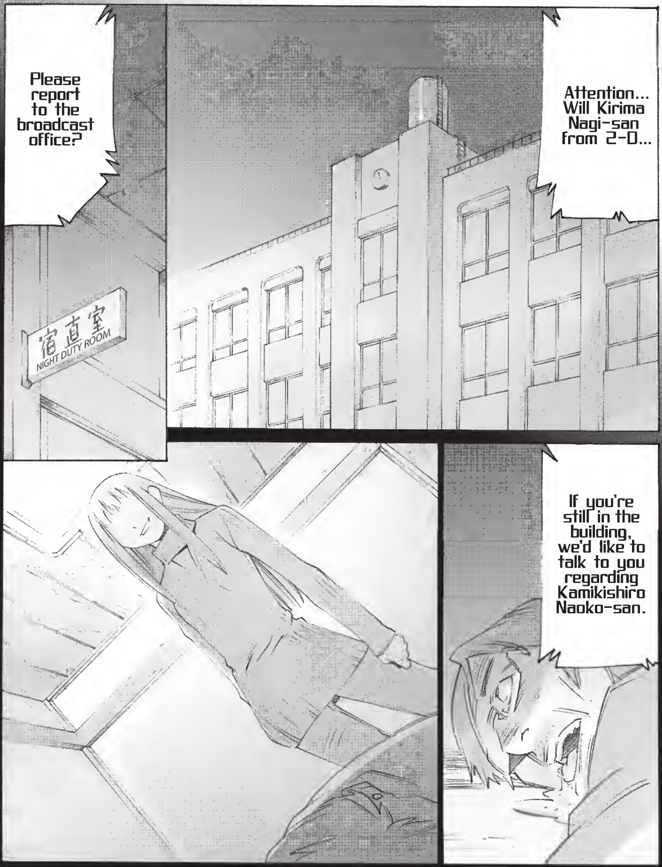

HEY, I'VE GOT AN *IDEA*. WHY DON'T WE LOOK FOR HER *TOGETHER*?
I'M *SURE* SHE'S STILL HERE *SOMEWHERE.*
YEAH, I'M GETTING A LITTLE WORRIED.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY DO THAT.
BUT *WHERE* DO YOU THINK THEY ARE?
PROBABLY SOMEWHERE *NOBODY* WOULD NOTICE 'EM. MAYBE THE ROOF?
OR UNDER THE GYM? OR, HEY, IT'S *FALL*, SO WHAT ABOUT THE *POOL* CHANGING ROOMS?
SOUNDS GOOD!
LET'S CHECK 'EM OUT!

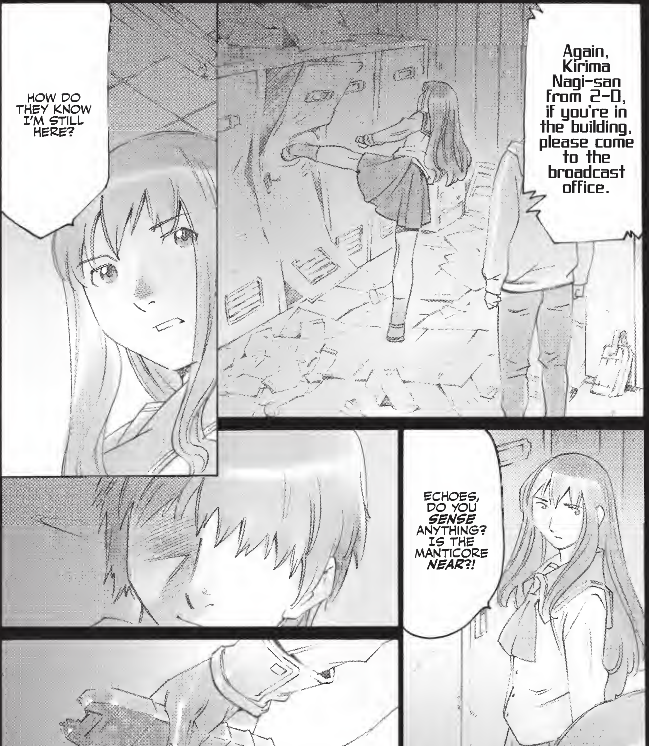

TANAKA-KUN, WERE YOU AND NAOKO-SAN...?
UM...
YEP! KAMIKISHIRO-SEMPAI ASKED HIM OUT!
WHA?!!
MASAMI?! THAT WAS A *SECRET*!!!
HEY, DON'T WORRY... *SEMPAI* WON'T TELL.

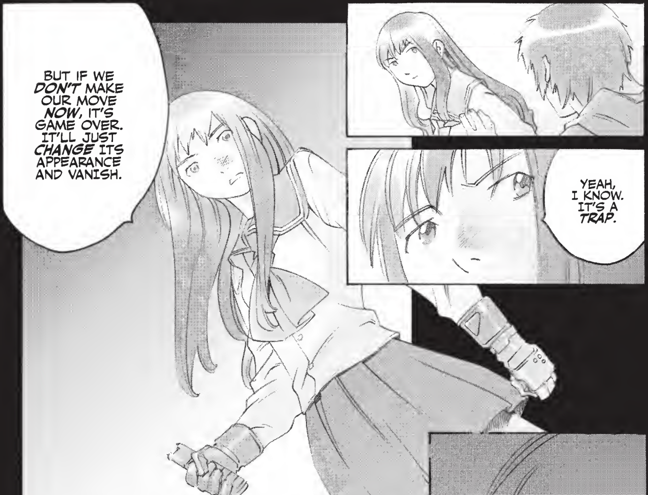

YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
NOPE.
DEAD SERIOUS.
WHOOAAAAA!
UM...
P-PLEASE... DON'T TELL ANYONE, OKAY?
SURE...
I WON'T.
BUT STILL...
WOOOOW!!!

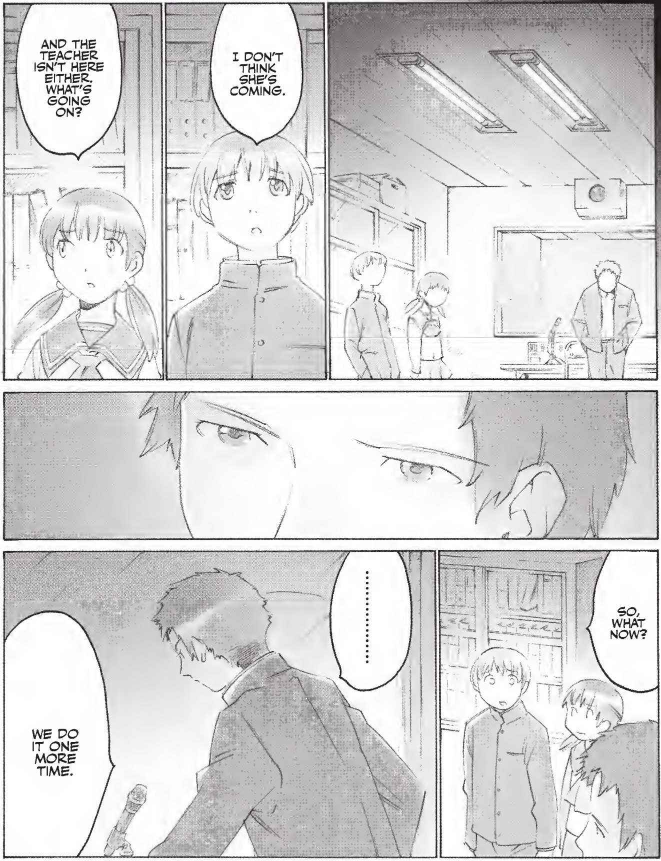

WE CHECKED OUT EVERY PLACE WE COULD THINK OF...
BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF EITHER OF THEM.

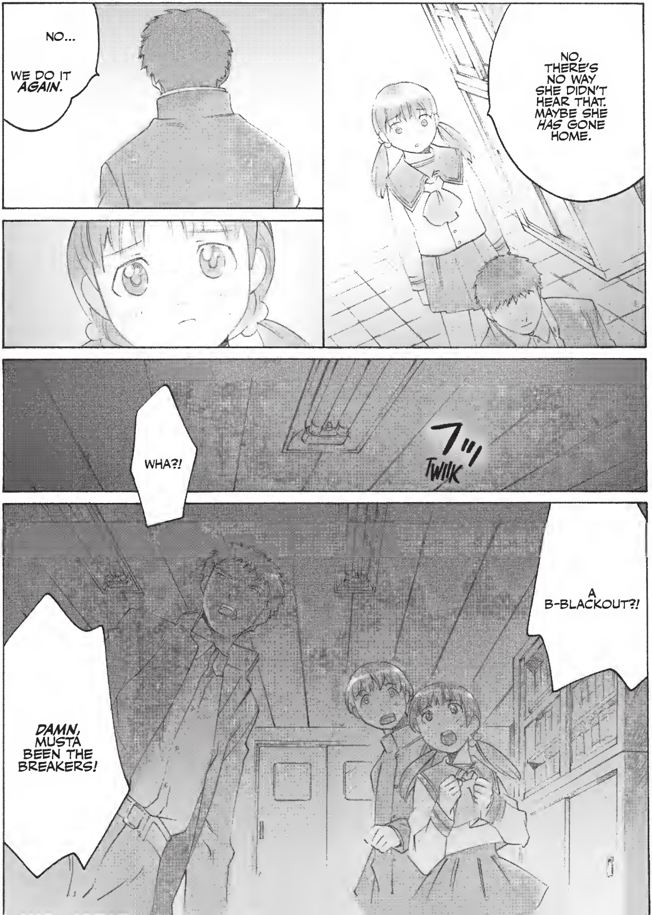

IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME...WHY DON'T WE JUST USE THE PA SYSTEM TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?
THE PA SYSTEM?
COURSE...
THE TEACHER ON NIGHT WATCH'LL GET PISSED, BUT WHO CARES?
HMM...
WELL... IT *WOULD* BE FASTER.
OKAY. ***SURE!*** I'LL HANDLE THE TEACHER.

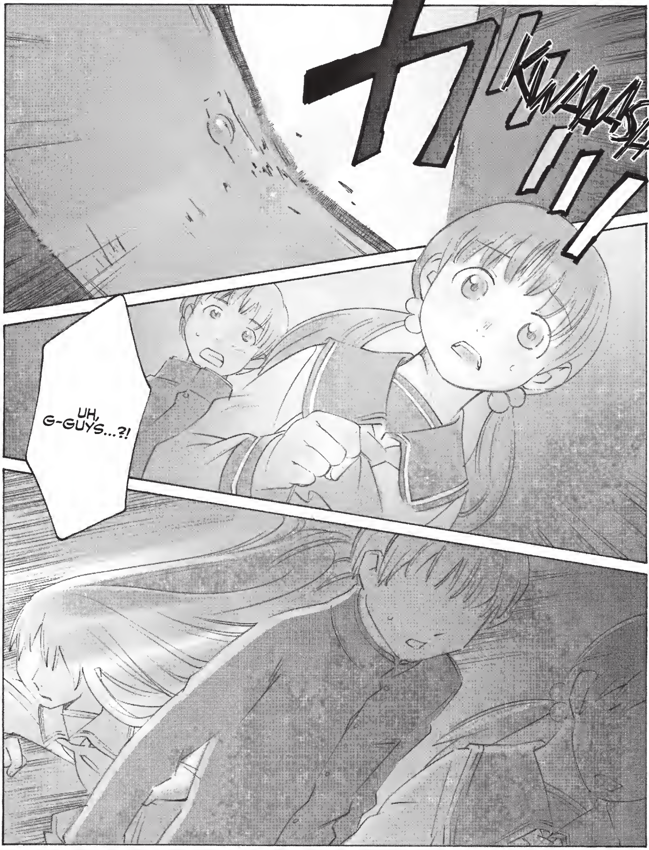

Attention... Will Kirima Nagi-san from 2-D...
Please report to the broadcast office?
宿直室
NIGHT DUTY ROOM
If you're still in the building, we'd like to talk to you regarding Kamikishiro Naoko-san.

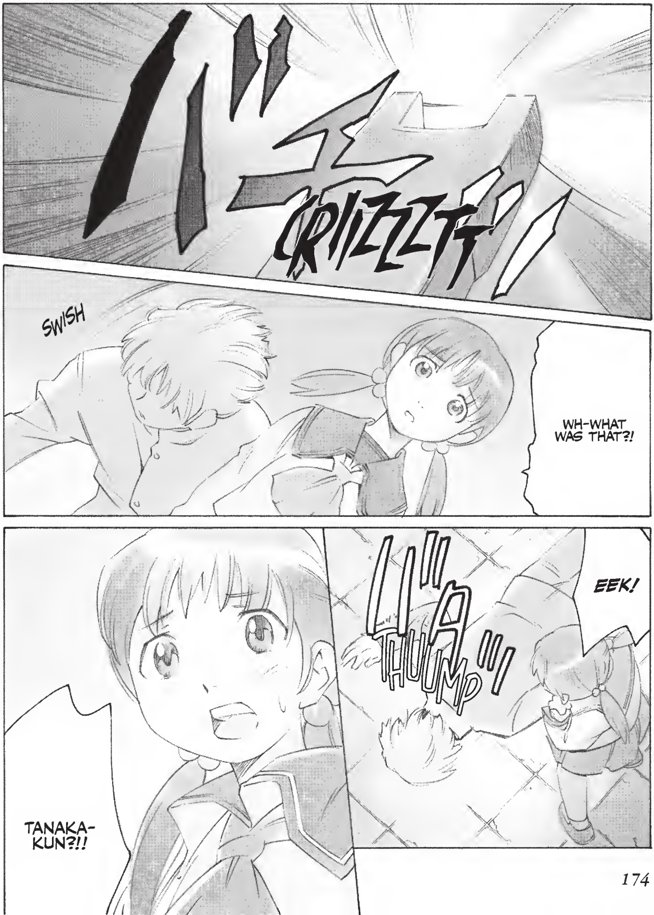

Again, Kirima Nagi-san from 2-D, if you're in the building, please come to the broadcast office.
HOW DO THEY KNOW I'M STILL HERE?
ECHOES, DO YOU *SENSE* ANYTHING? IS THE MANTICORE *NEAR*?!

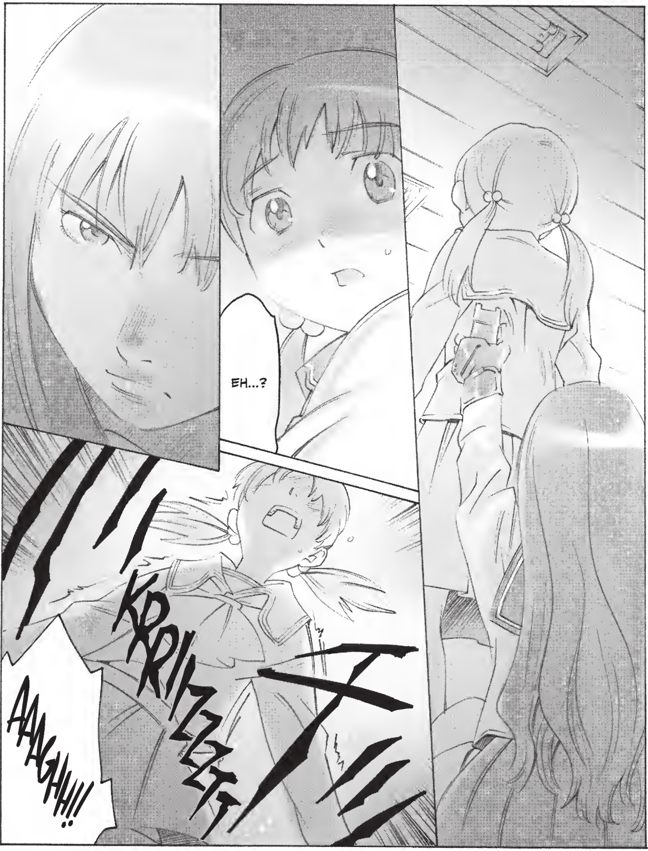

YEAH, I KNOW. IT'S A *TRAP.*
BUT IF WE *DON'T* MAKE OUR MOVE *NOW*, IT'S GAME OVER. IT'LL JUST *CHANGE* ITS APPEARANCE AND VANISH.
……
CRITTZZZT

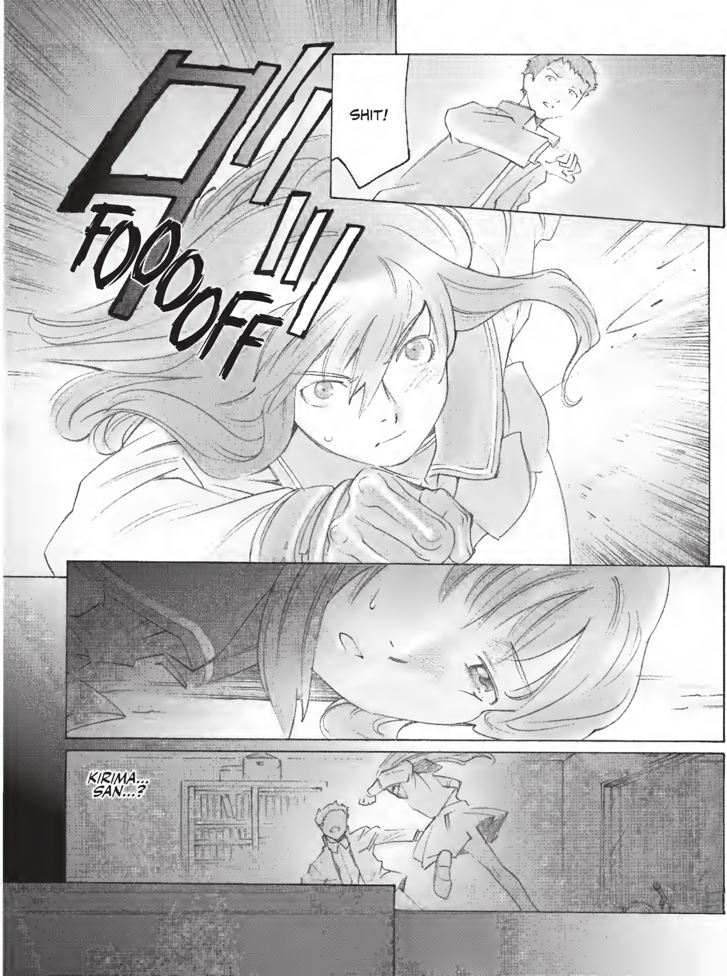

I DON'T THINK SHE'S COMING.
AND THE TEACHER ISN'T HERE EITHER. WHAT'S GOING ON?
SO, WHAT NOW?
....
WE DO IT ONE MORE TIME.

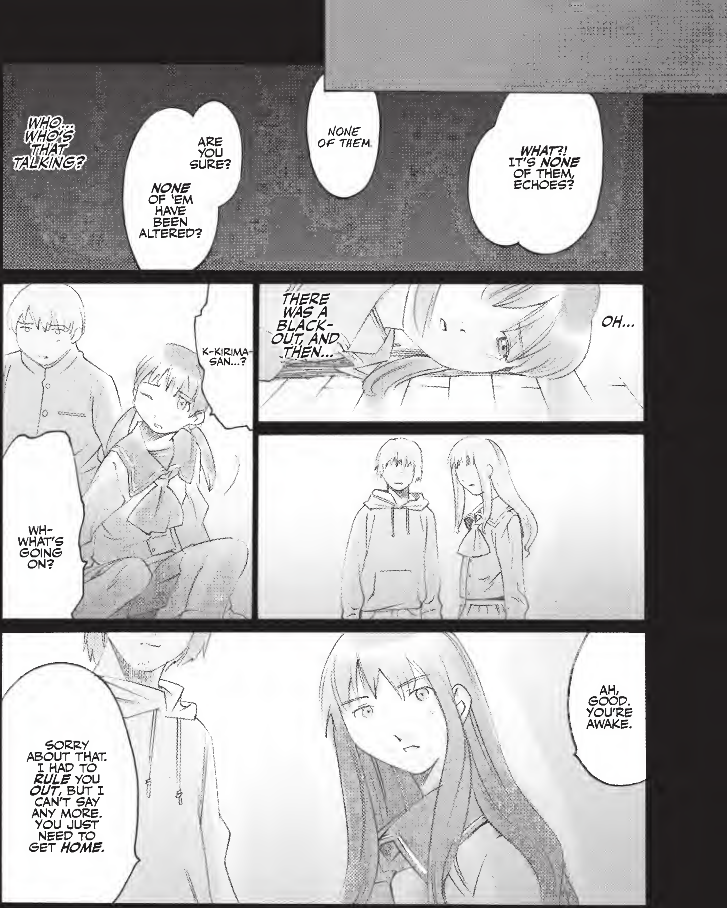

NO, THERE'S NO WAY SHE DIDN'T HEAR THAT. MAYBE SHE *HAS* GONE HOME.
NO... WE DO IT *AGAIN*.
フッ TWIIK
WHA?!
A B-BLACKOUT?!
DAMN, MUSTA BEEN THE BREAKERS!

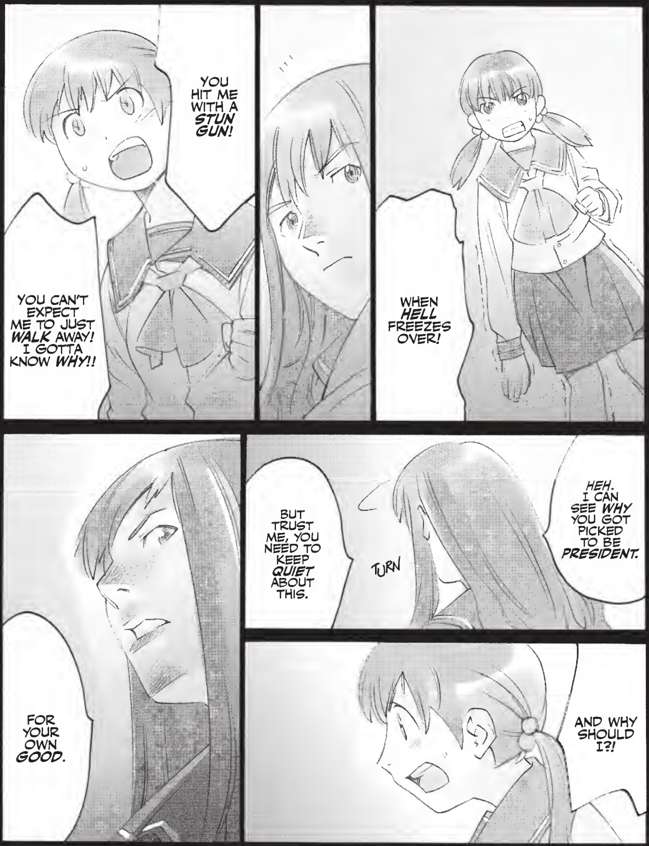

ガ
KWAAASH!!!
UH, G-GUYS...?!

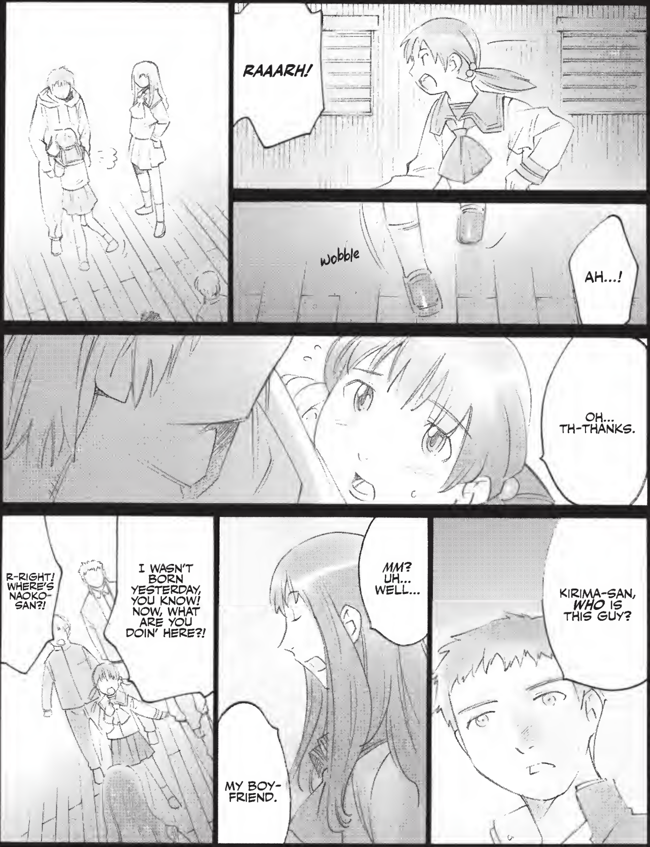

バチ
CRIIZZZT!!
WH-WHAT WAS THAT?!
SWISH
EEK!
THUUMP
TANAKA-KUN?!!

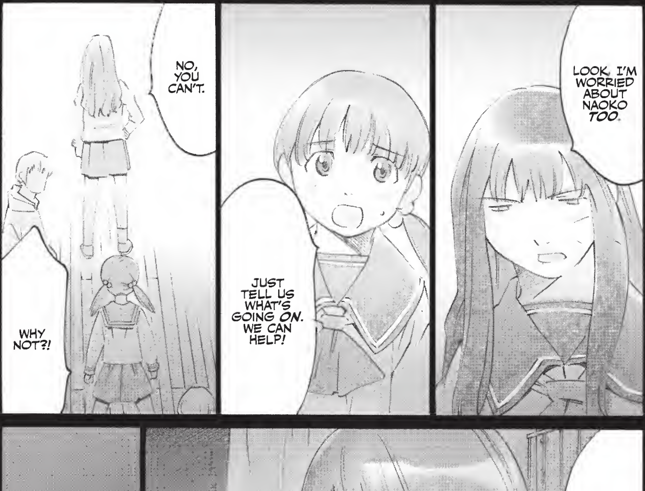

EH...?
KRRIIZZZTT
AAAGHH!!

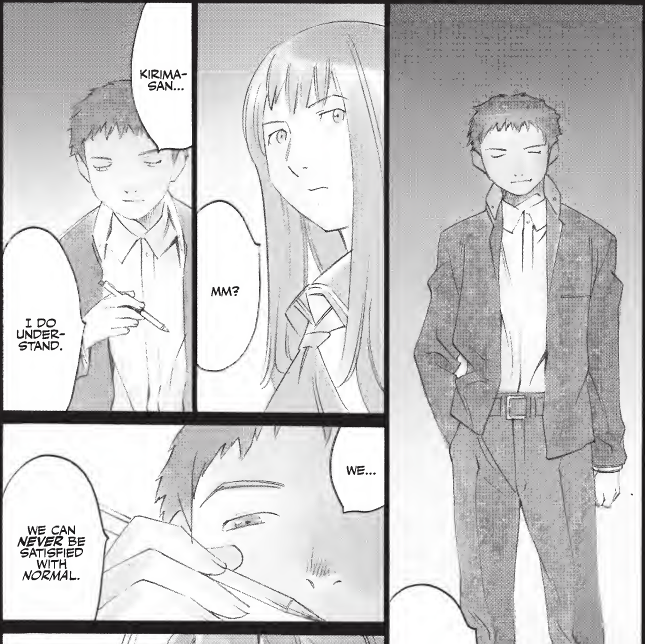

SHIT!
FOOOOFF
KIRIMA... SAN...?

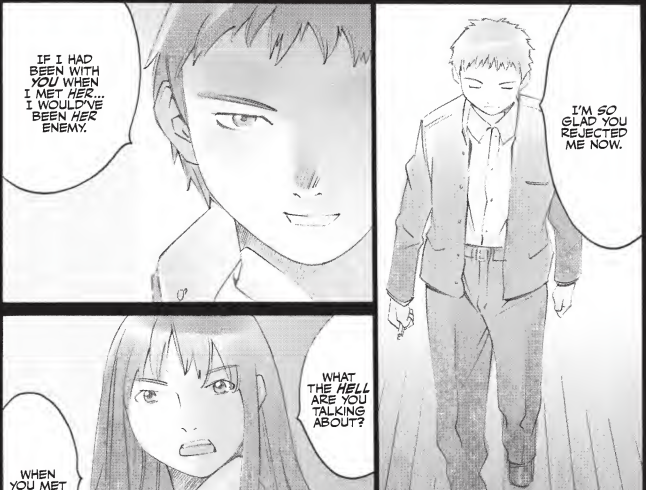

WHAT?! IT'S NONE OF THEM, ECHOES?
NONE OF THEM.
ARE YOU SURE? NONE OF 'EM HAVE BEEN ALTERED?
WHO... WHO'S THAT TALKING?
OH...
THERE WAS A BLACKOUT, AND THEN...
K-KIRIMA-SAN...?
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?
AH, GOOD. YOU'RE AWAKE.
SORRY ABOUT THAT. I HAD TO RULE YOU OUT, BUT I CAN'T SAY ANY MORE. YOU JUST NEED TO GET HOME.

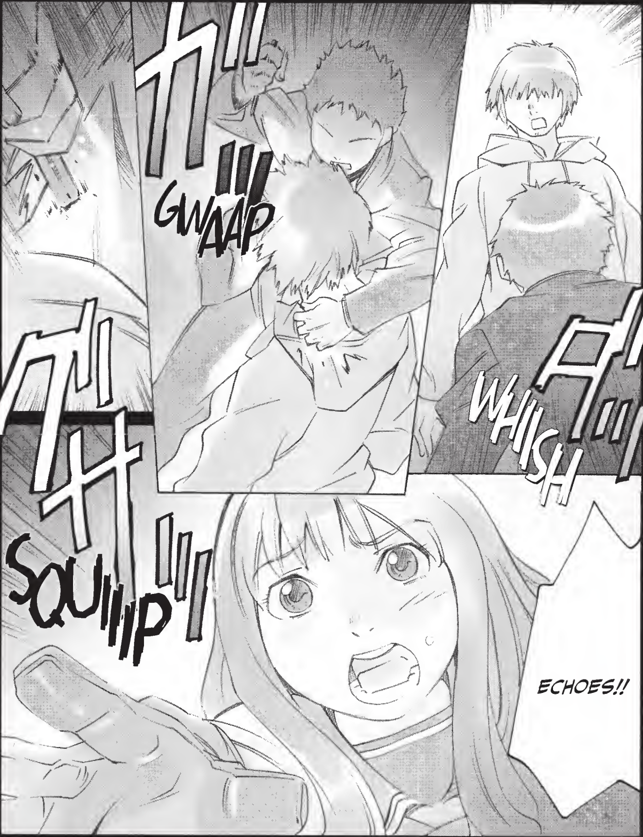

WHEN HELL FREEZES OVER!
YOU HIT ME WITH A STUN GUN!
YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO JUST WALK AWAY! I GOTTA KNOW WHY!!
HEH. I CAN SEE WHY YOU GOT PICKED TO BE PRESIDENT.
BUT TRUST ME, YOU NEED TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS.
TURN
AND WHY SHOULD I?!
FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

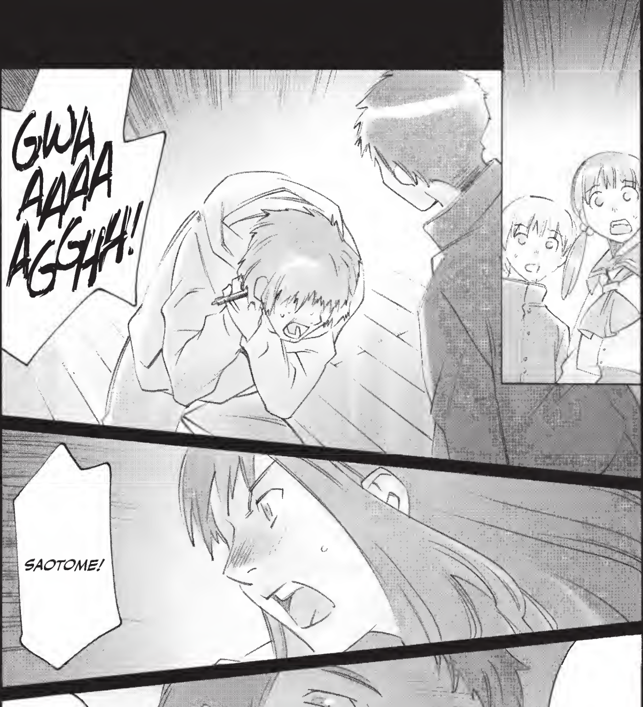

RAAARH!
AH...!
wobble
OH... TH-THANKS.
KIRIMA-SAN, WHO IS THIS GUY?
MM? UH... WELL...
MY BOY-FRIEND.
I WASN'T BORN YESTERDAY, YOU KNOW! NOW, WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?!
R-RIGHT! WHERE'S NAOKO-SAN?!


LOOK, I'M WORRIED ABOUT NAOKO *TOO*.
JUST TELL US WHAT'S GOING *ON*. WE CAN HELP!
NO, YOU CAN'T.
WHY NOT?!
THIS IS *NOT* A NORMAL SITUATION.
UNLESS YOU'RE SCREWED UP LIKE *ME*, YOU CAN'T *POSSIBLY* TACKLE IT.
HEH HEH HEH.


KIRIMA-SAN...
MM?
I DO UNDERSTAND.
WE...
WE CAN *NEVER* BE SATISFIED WITH *NORMAL*.
WHAT?
NORMAL STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH, *HUH*?

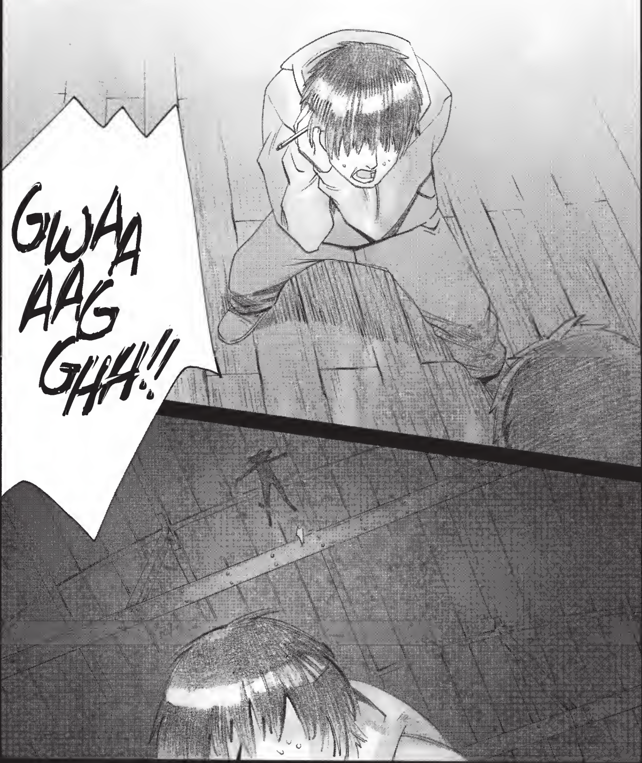

I'M *SO* GLAD YOU REJECTED ME NOW.
IF I HAD BEEN WITH *YOU* WHEN I MET *HER*... I WOULD'VE BEEN *HER* ENEMY.
WHAT THE *HELL* ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHEN YOU MET *WHO*?
HEH. NAGI... NAGI... NAGI...
YOU'RE AS *NORMAL* AS THEY COME.

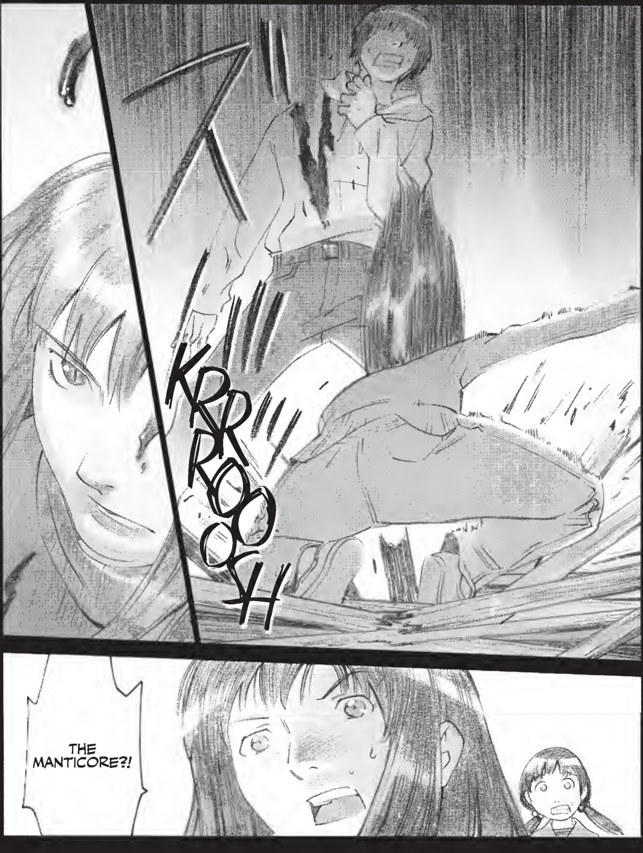

ガッ
GWAAP
ダッ
WHISH
グイ
ッ
SQUIIIIP
ECHOES!!

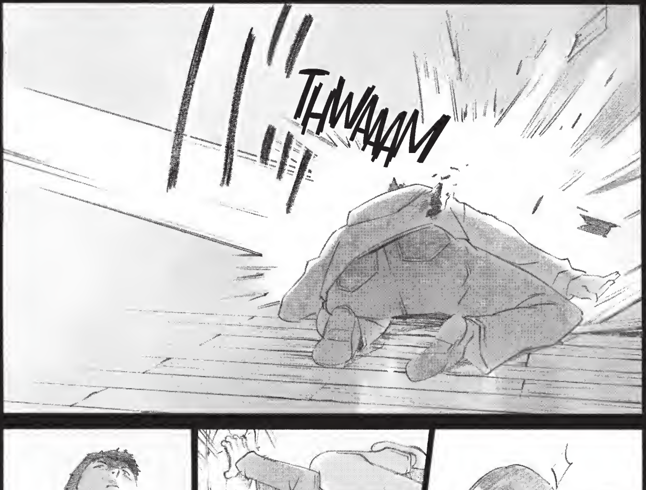

GWAAAAAAGGHH!
SAOTOME!
CONGRATULATIONS...
NOW YOU'RE OFFICIALLY OUR ENEMY.

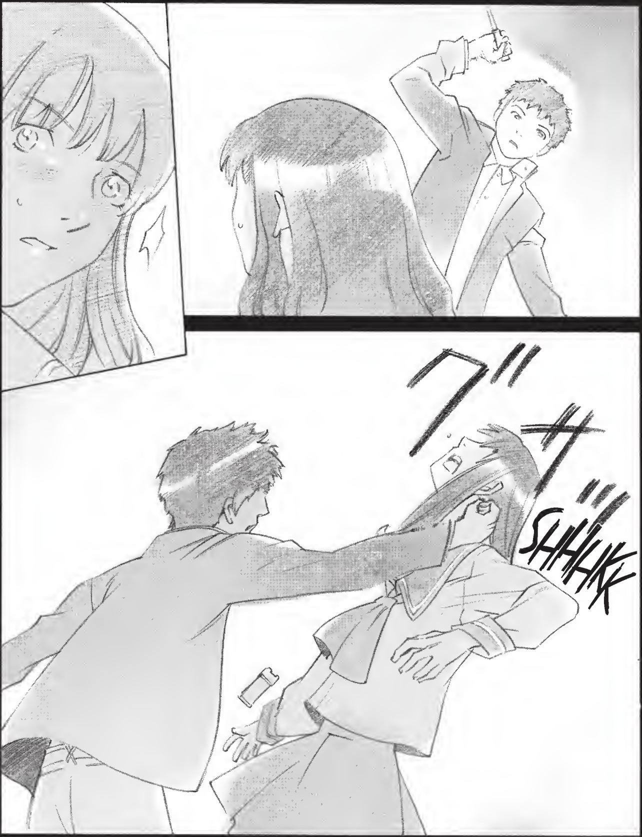
第21話

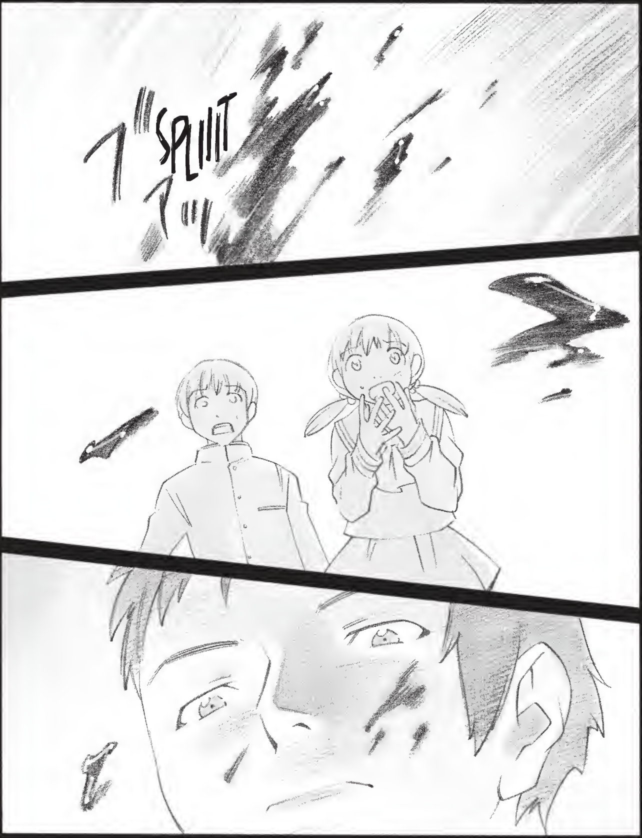
Chapter Twenty-One

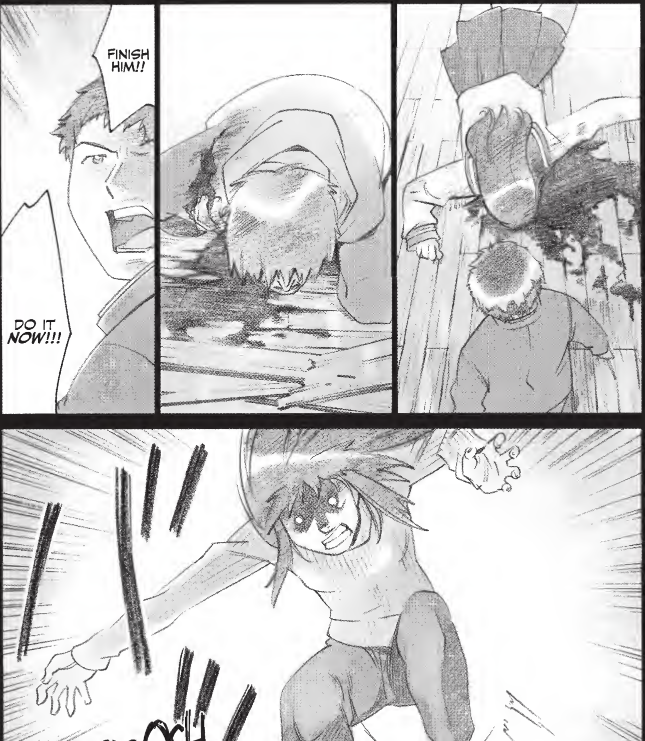

GWAAAAGGHH!!

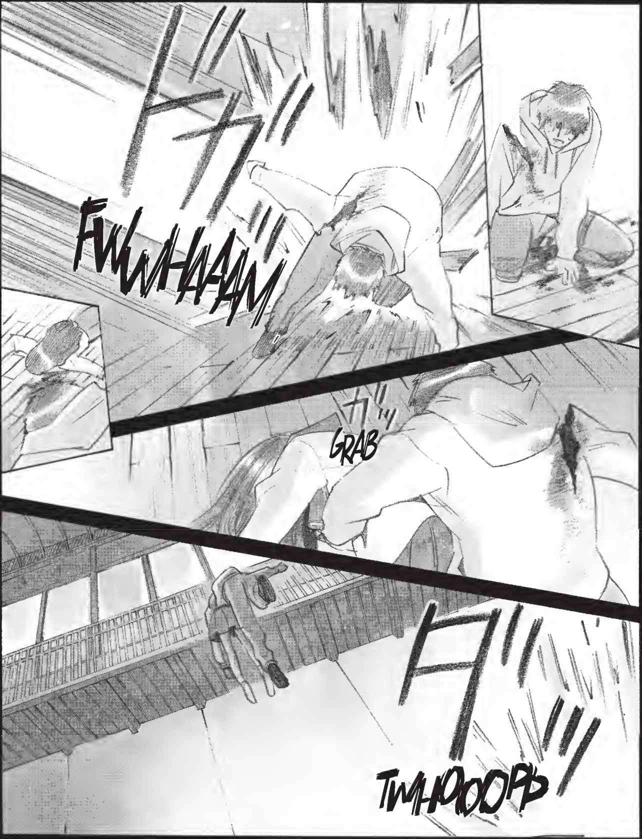

KRRRROOOSH
THE MANTICORE?!

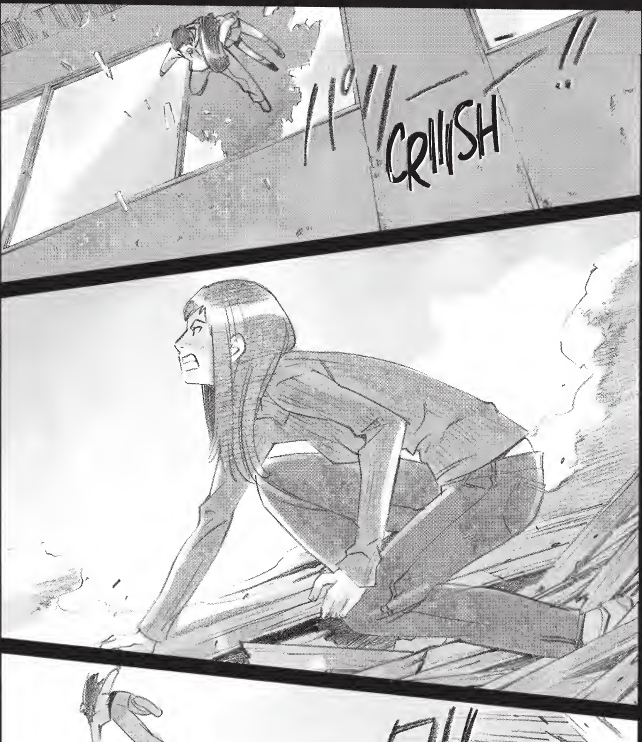

THWAAAM
PLAAP

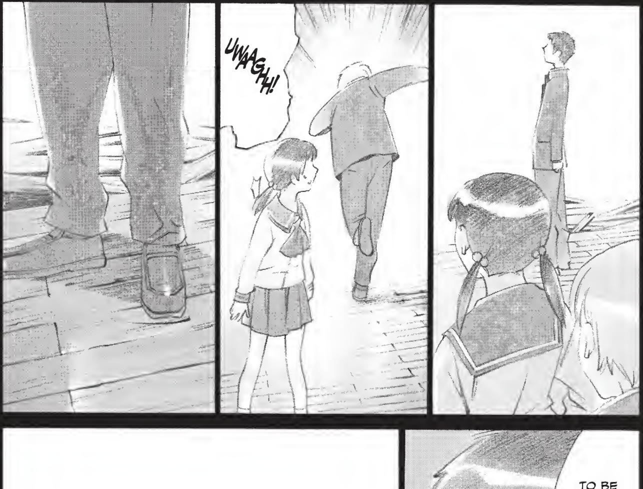

グサッ
SHHKK

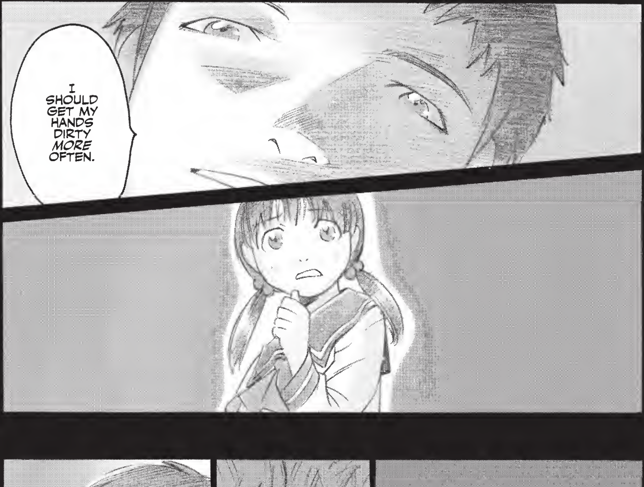

SPLIIIT

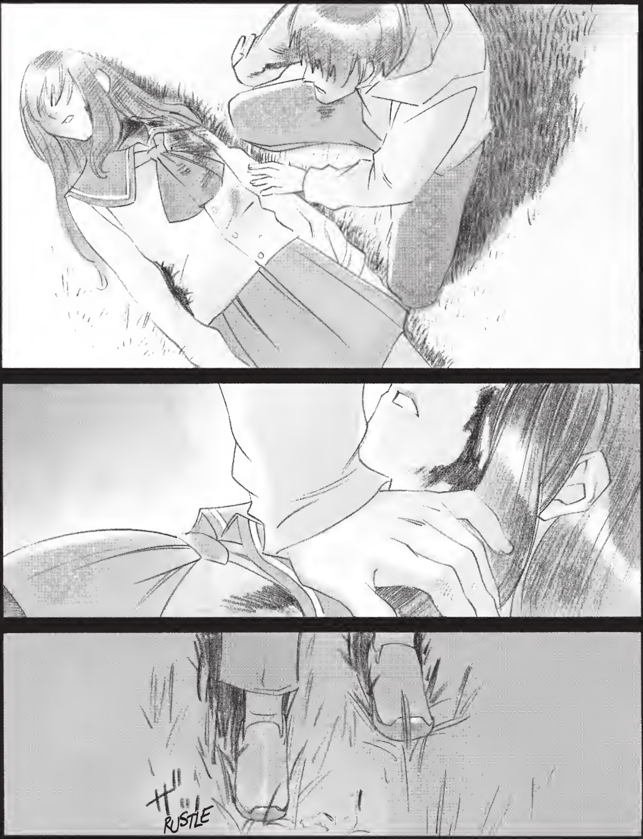

FINISH HIM!!
DO IT NOW!!!
WOOOOSH

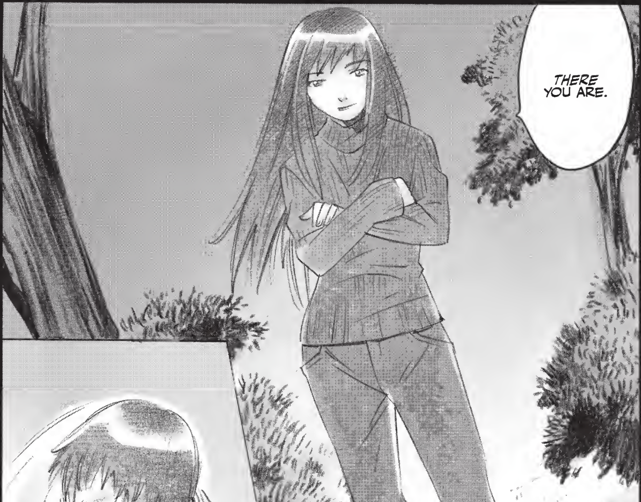

FWWHAAM
GRAB
TWHOOOP

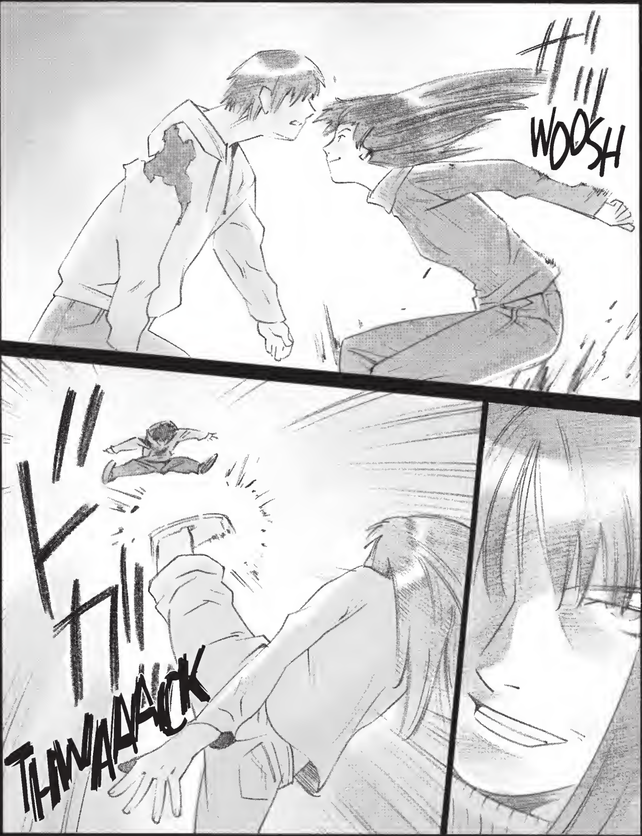

CRUSH
THWHOOP

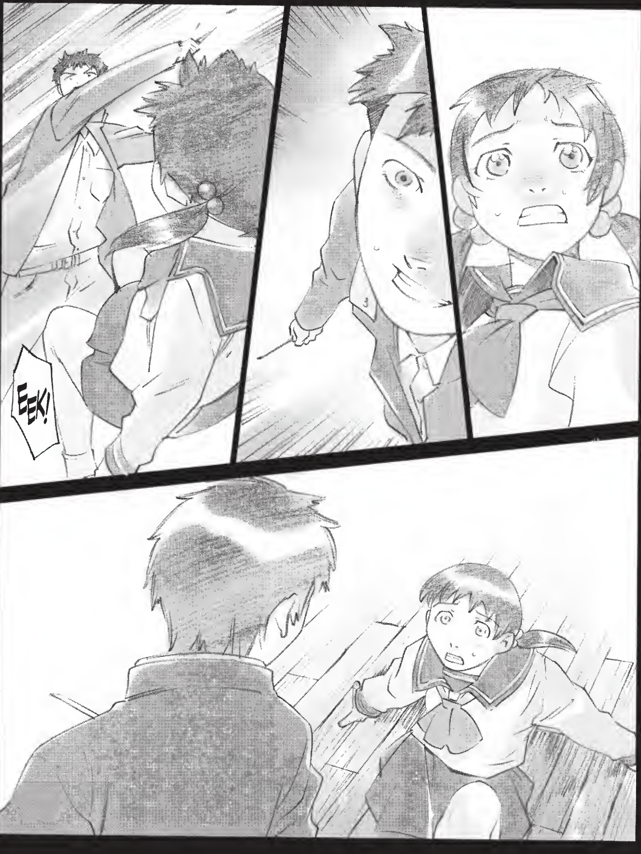

UWAAGHH!
TO BE HONEST, THE PLAN WAS FOR KIRIMA NAGI TO KILL ME HERE, BUT *OH WELL*.
THIS IS *FUN* TOO.

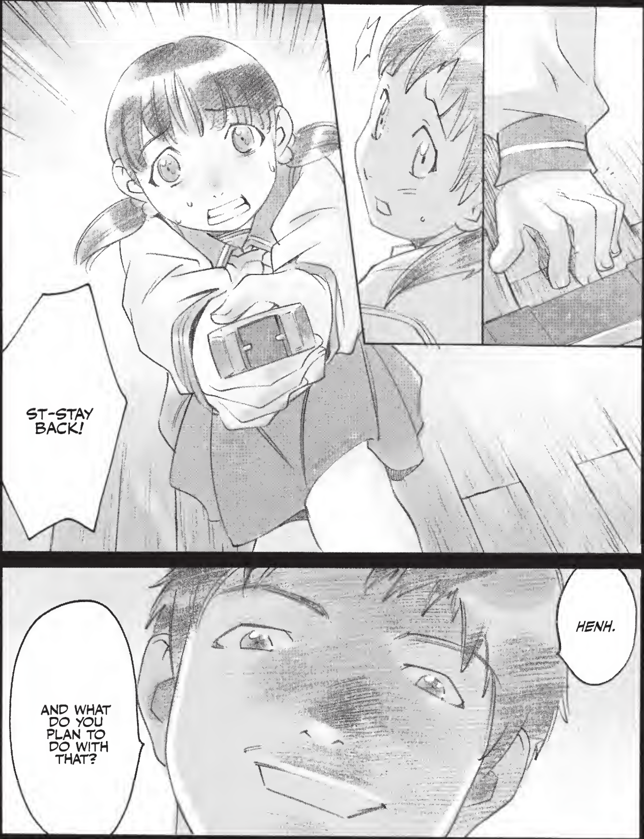

I SHOULD GET MY HANDS DIRTY *MORE* OFTEN.

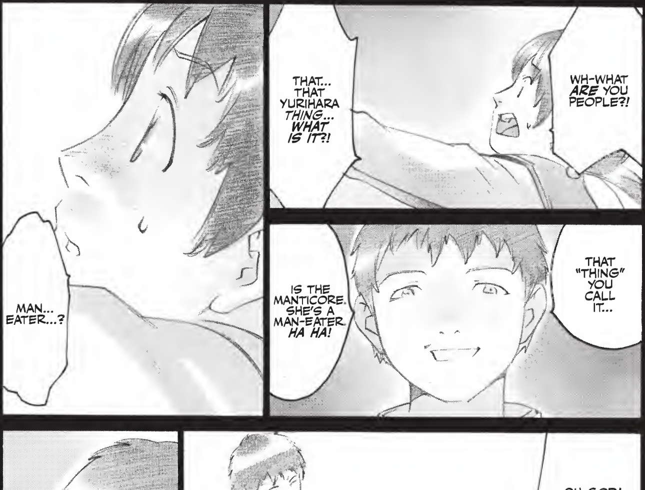

RUSTLE

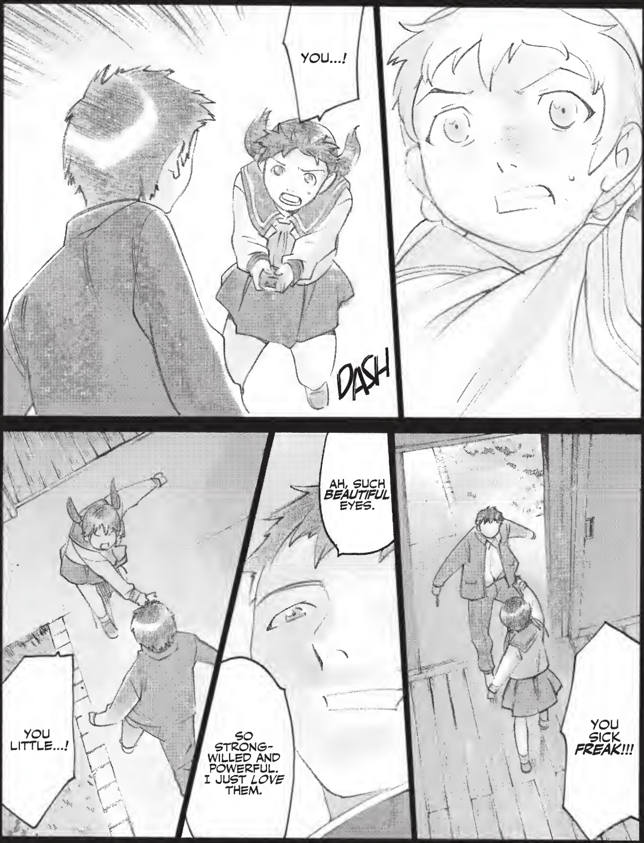

THERE YOU ARE.

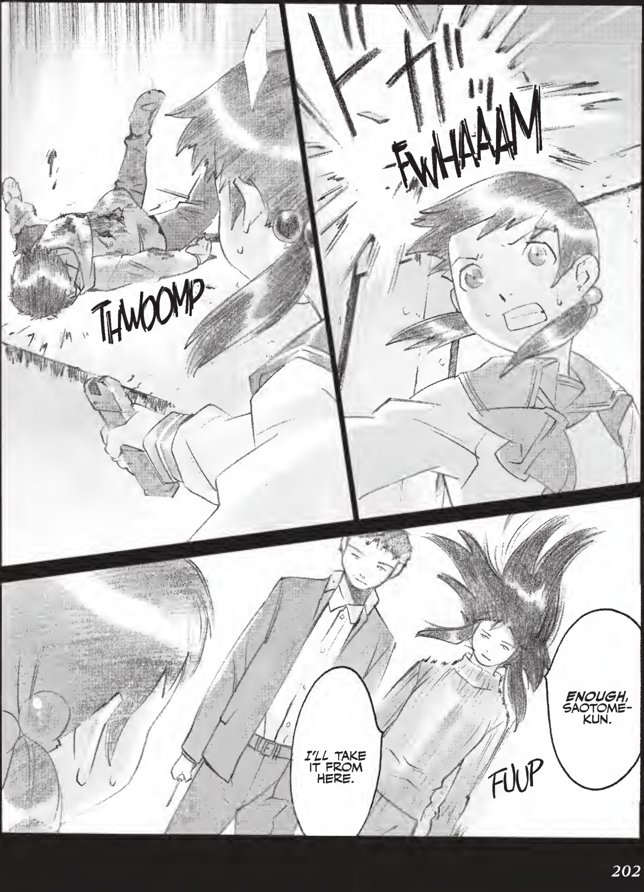

WOOSH
THWAAACK


EEK!

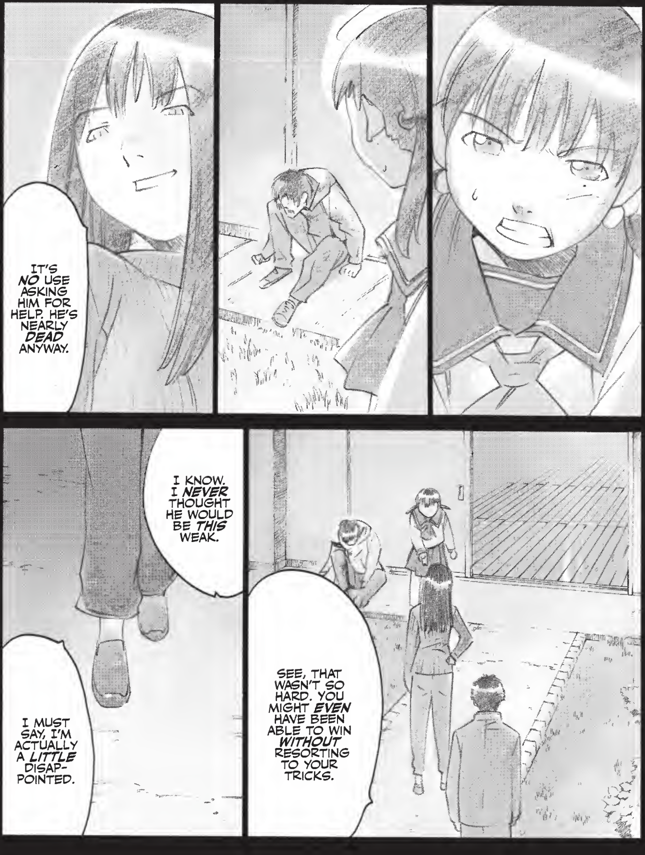

ST-STAY BACK!
HENH.
AND WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH THAT?

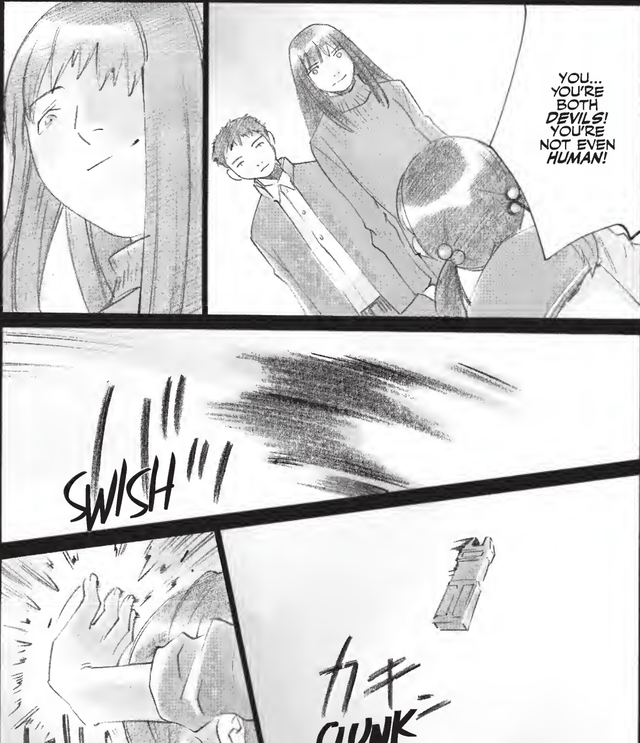

WH-WHAT *ARE* YOU PEOPLE?!
THAT... THAT YURIHARA *THING*... ***WHAT IS IT?!***
THAT "THING" YOU CALL IT...
IS THE MANTICORE. SHE'S A MAN-EATER *HA HA!*
MAN... EATER...?
OH GOD! TH-THEN THAT MEANS NAOKO-SAN'S...?
AND ALL THOSE MISSING PEOPLE...?
YEP. *YUMMY*.

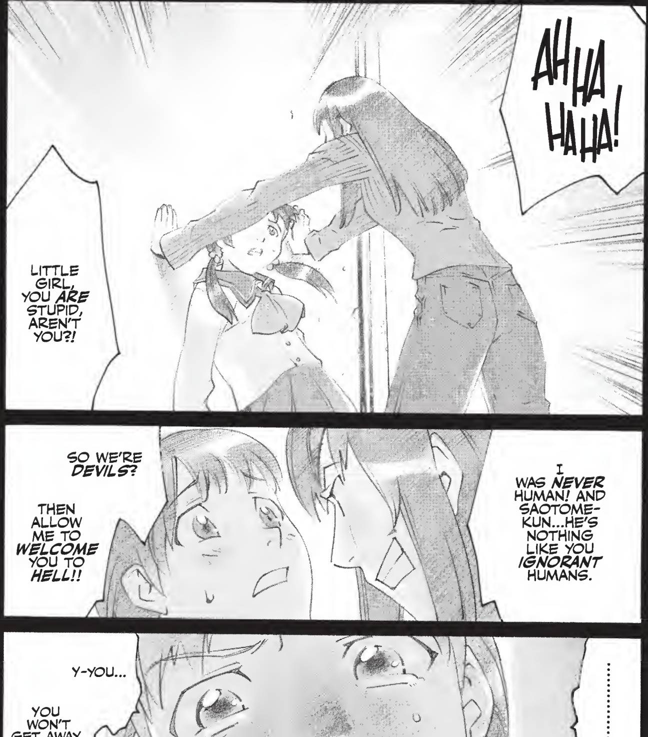

YOU...!
DASH
YOU LITTLE...!
AH, SUCH *BEAUTIFUL* EYES.
SO STRONG-WILLED AND POWERFUL. I JUST *LOVE* THEM.
YOU SICK *FREAK!!!*

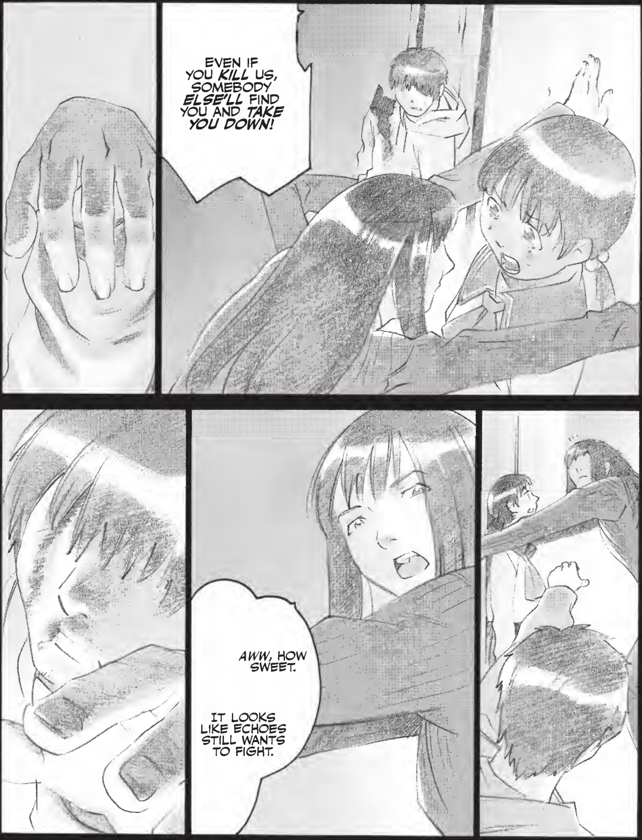


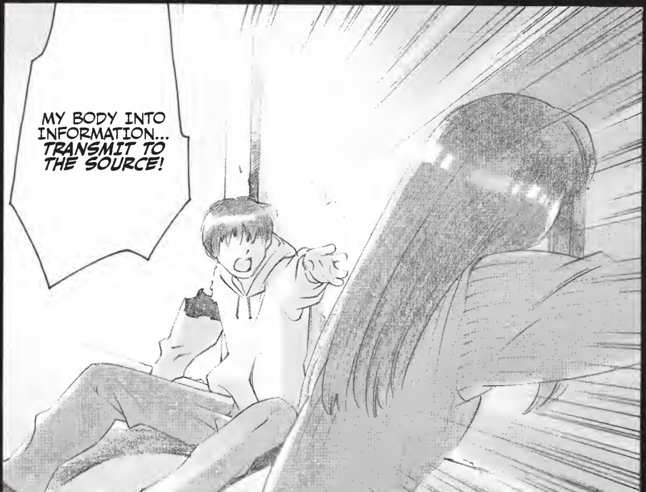
FWHAAAM
THWOOMP
ENOUGH, SAOTOME-KUN.
I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
FUUP

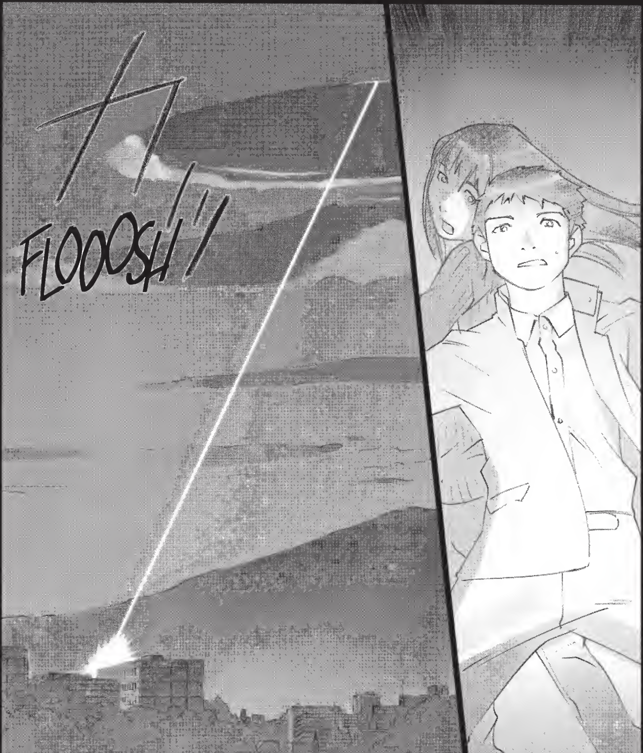

IT'S NO USE ASKING HIM FOR HELP. HE'S NEARLY DEAD ANYWAY.
SEE, THAT WASN'T SO HARD. YOU MIGHT EVEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WIN WITHOUT RESORTING TO YOUR TRICKS.
I KNOW. I NEVER THOUGHT HE WOULD BE THIS WEAK.
I MUST SAY, I'M ACTUALLY A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED.


YOU... YOU'RE BOTH *DEVILS!* YOU'RE NOT EVEN *HUMAN!*
SWISH
カキー
CLUNK
WHAP

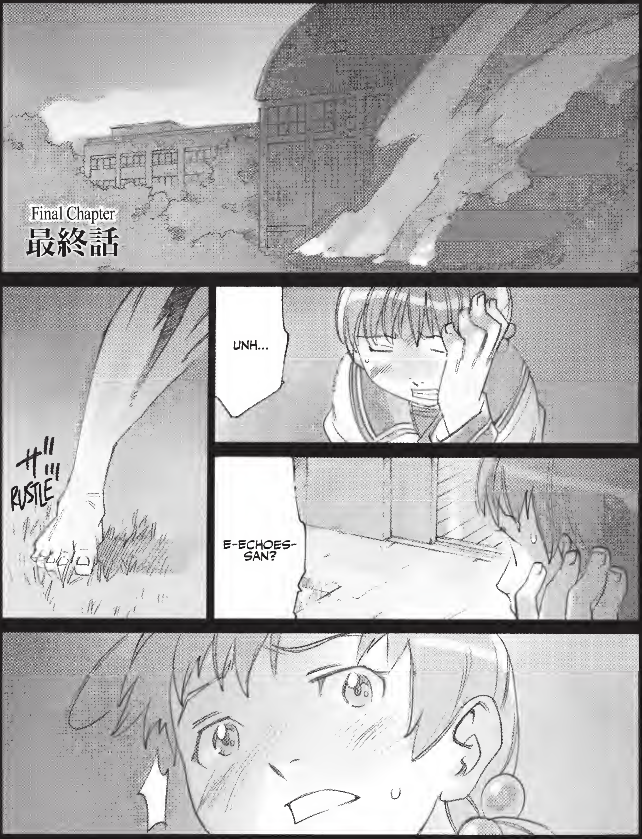

AH HA HA HA!
LITTLE GIRL, YOU ARE STUPID, AREN'T YOU?!
I WAS NEVER HUMAN! AND SAOTOME-KUN...HE'S NOTHING LIKE YOU IGNORANT HUMANS.
SO WE'RE DEVILS?
THEN ALLOW ME TO WELCOME YOU TO HELL!!
....
Y-YOU...
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!

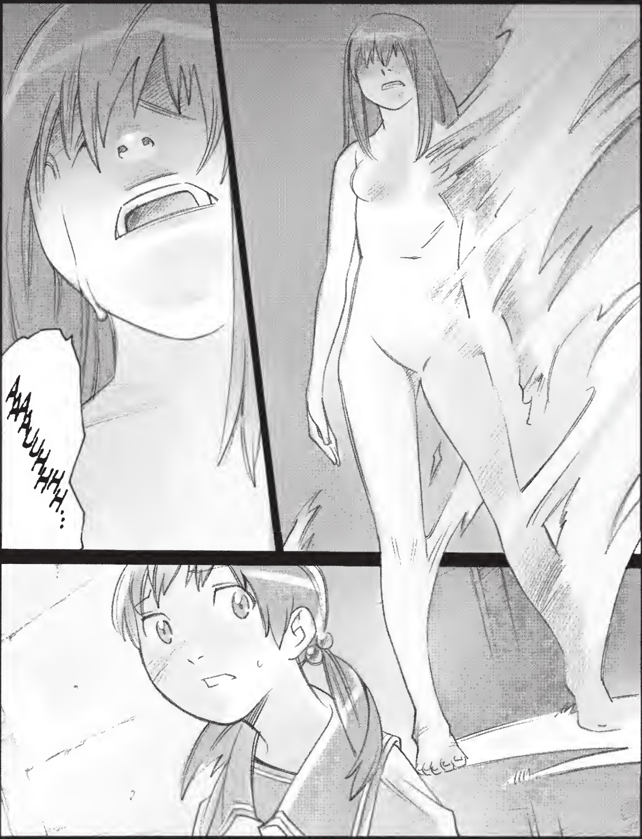

EVEN IF YOU *KILL* US, SOMEBODY *ELSE'LL* FIND YOU AND *TAKE YOU DOWN!*
AWW, HOW SWEET.
IT LOOKS LIKE ECHOES STILL WANTS TO FIGHT.

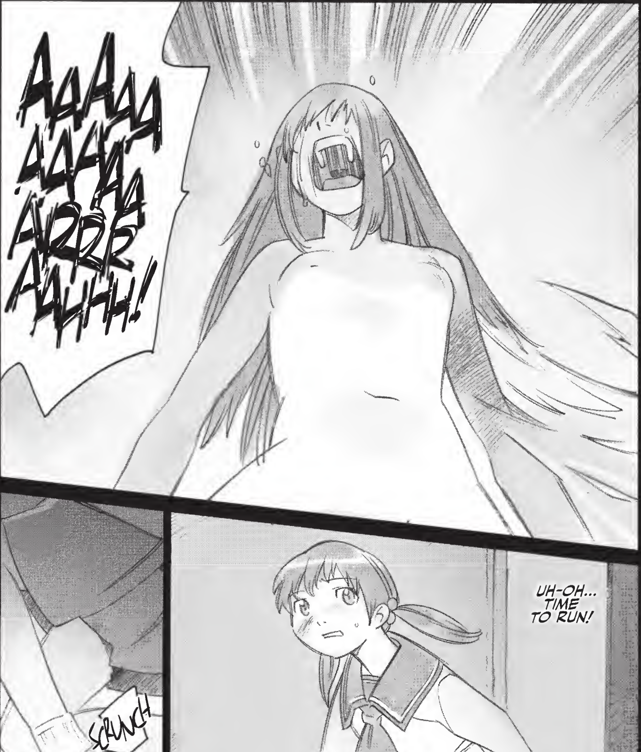

MY BODY INTO INFORMATION... *TRANSMIT TO THE SOURCE!*

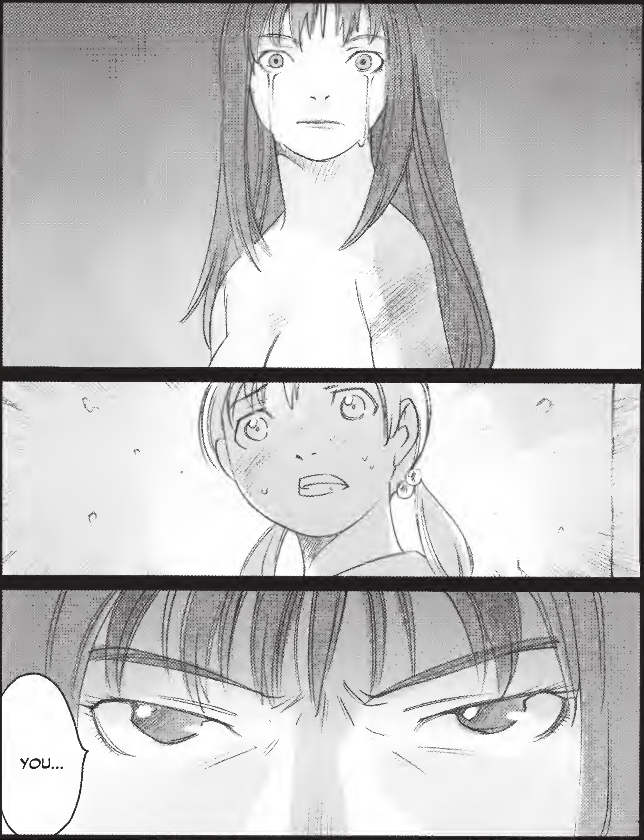

FLOOOSH!!

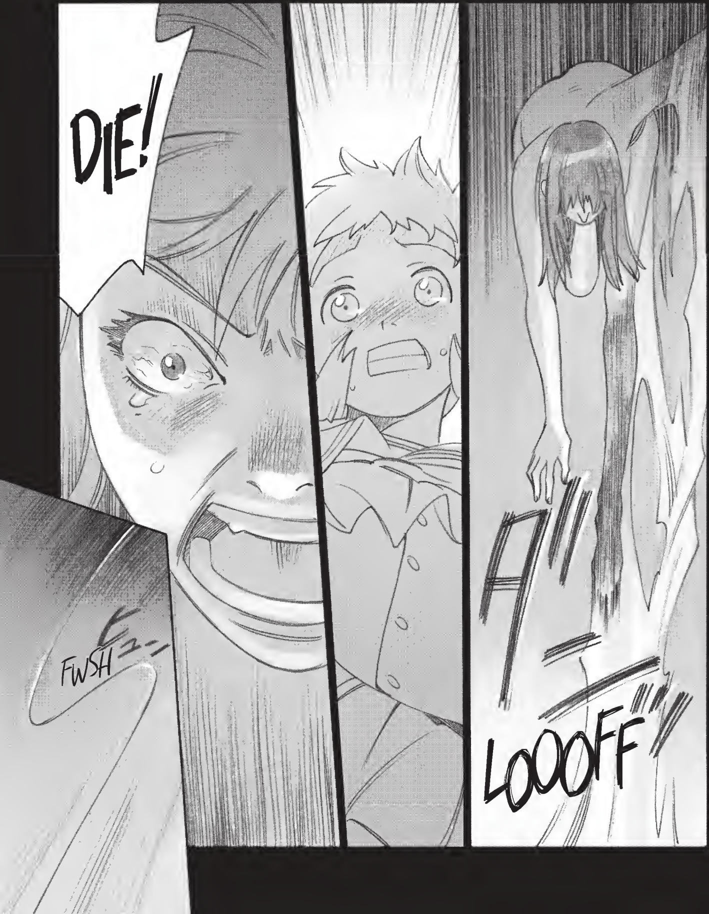
Final Chapter
最終話

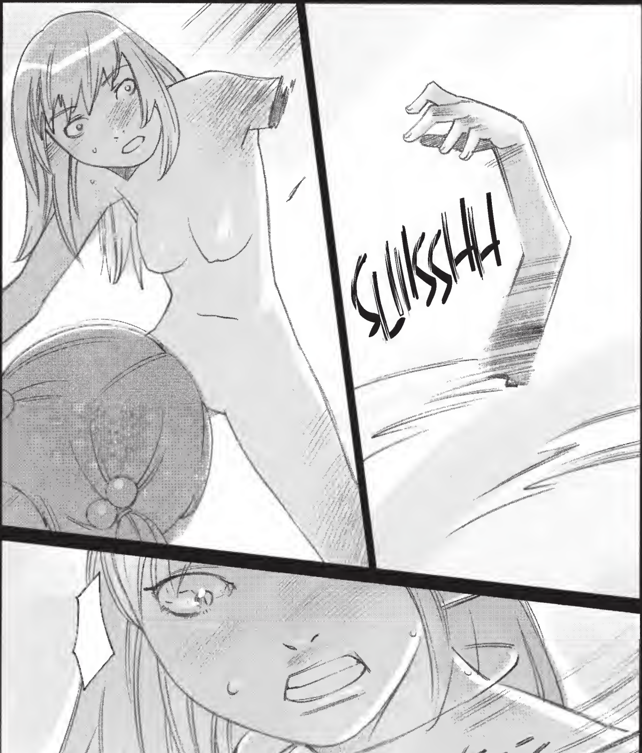

ザッ
RUSTLE
UNH...
E-ECHOES-SAN?

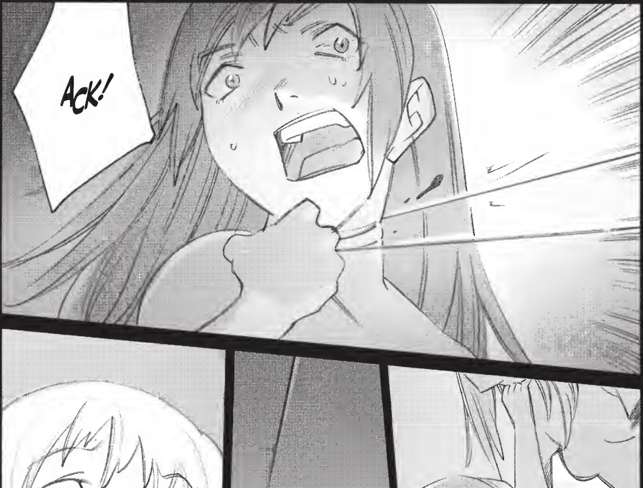

AAAAUUHHH..

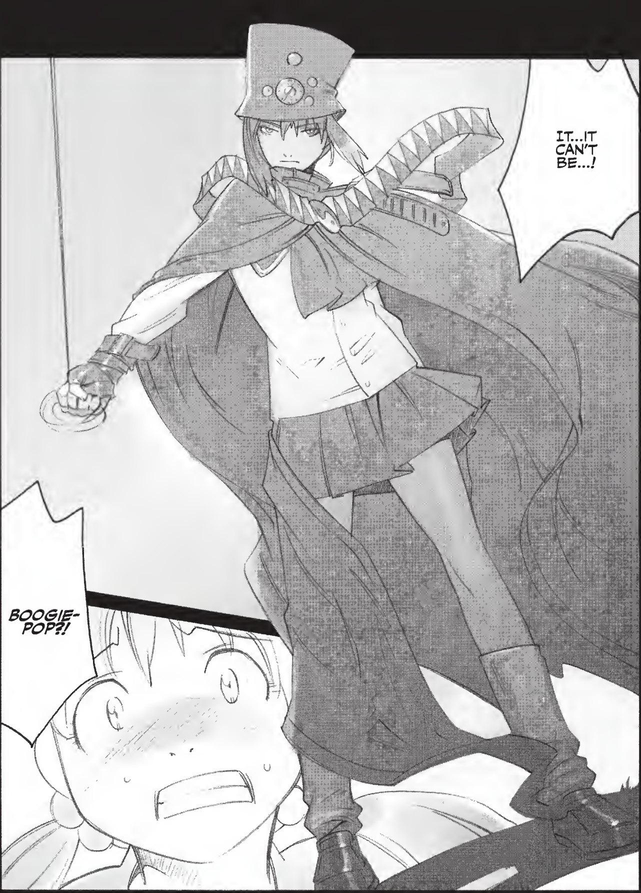

AAAAAAAAAAAAARRRAAAHHH!
UH-OH... TIME TO RUN!
SCRUNCH

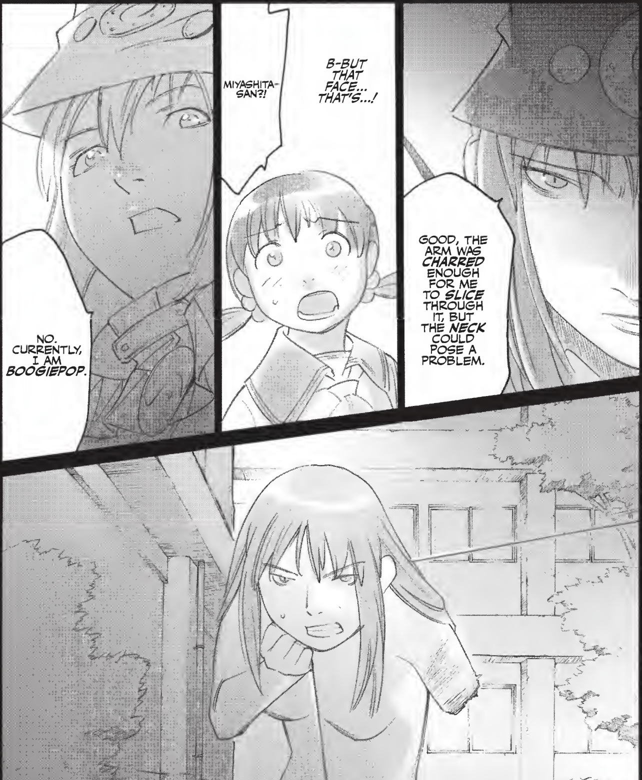

YOU...

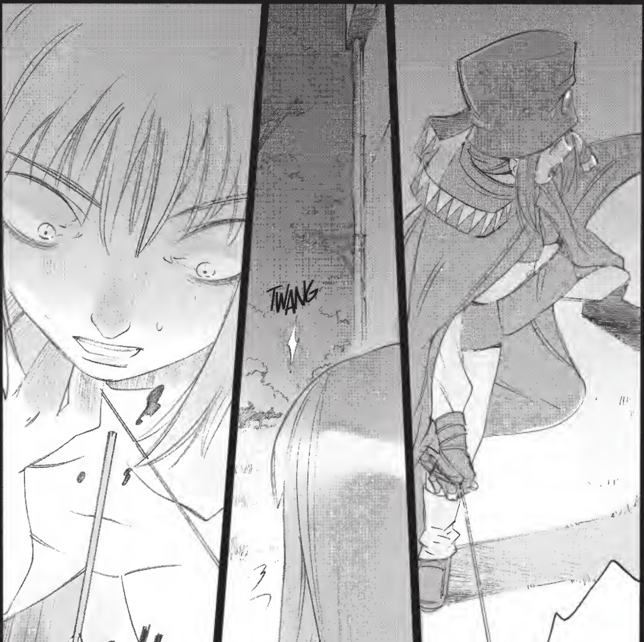

LOOOFF
DIE!
FWSH

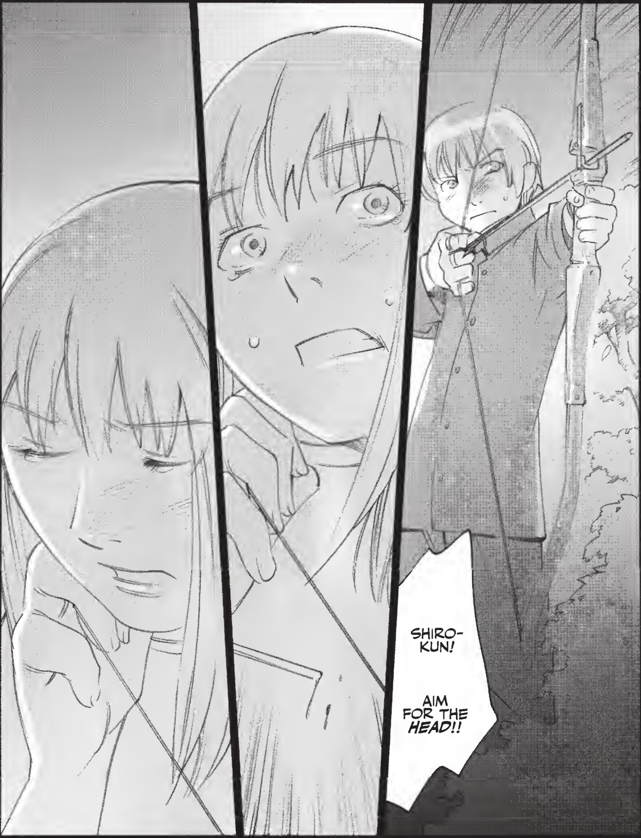

SWISSHH
ヒュー
FWSH

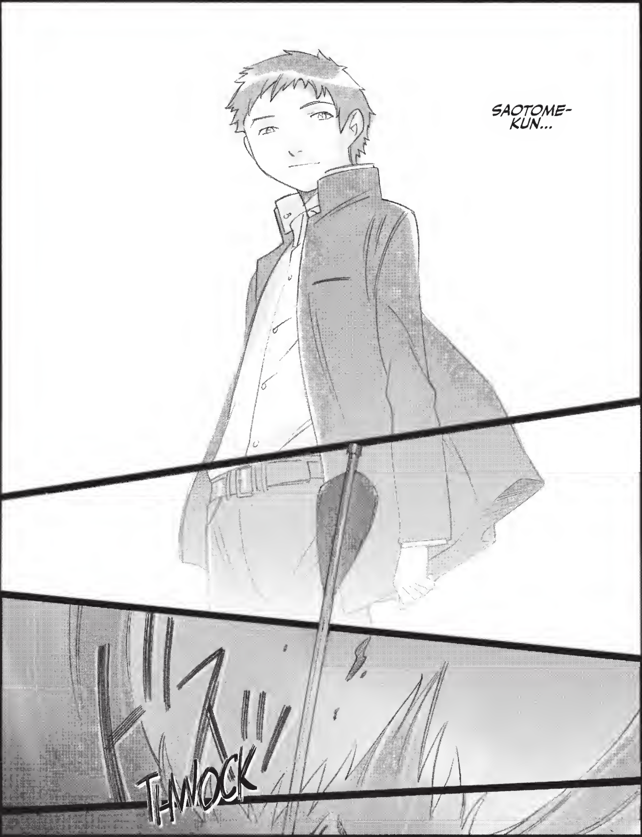

ACK!

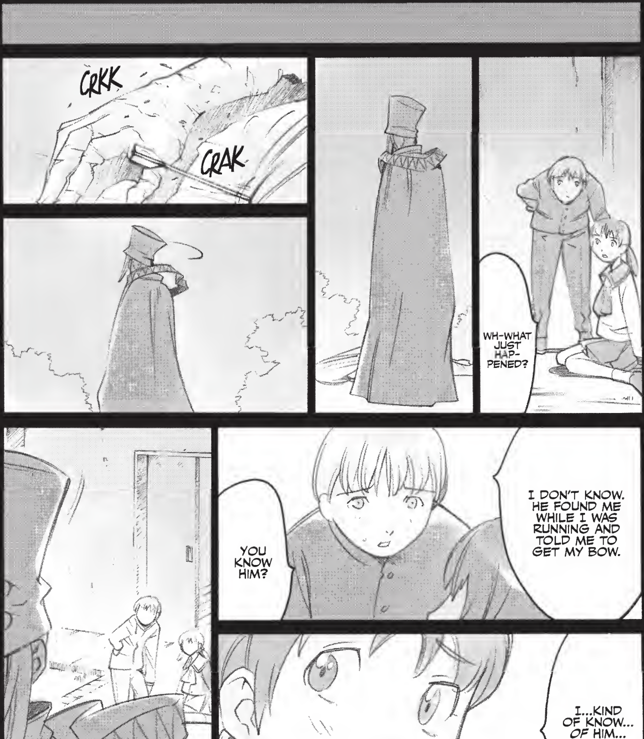

IT...IT CAN'T BE...!
BOOGIE-POP?!

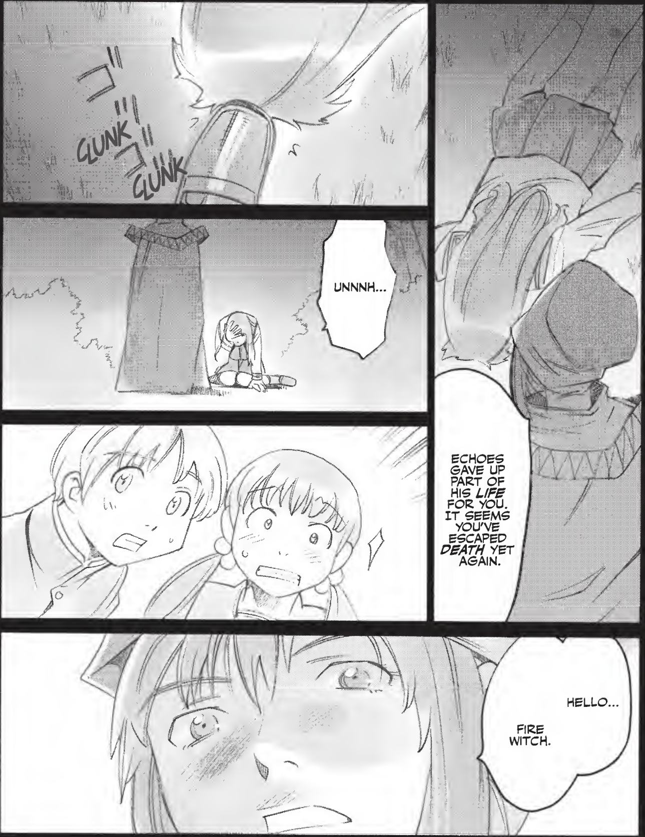

GOOD, THE ARM WAS ***CHARRED*** ENOUGH FOR ME TO ***SLICE*** THROUGH IT, BUT THE ***NECK*** COULD POSE A PROBLEM.
B-BUT THAT FACE... THAT'S...!
MIYASHITA-SAN?!
NO. CURRENTLY, I AM ***BOOGIEPOP***.

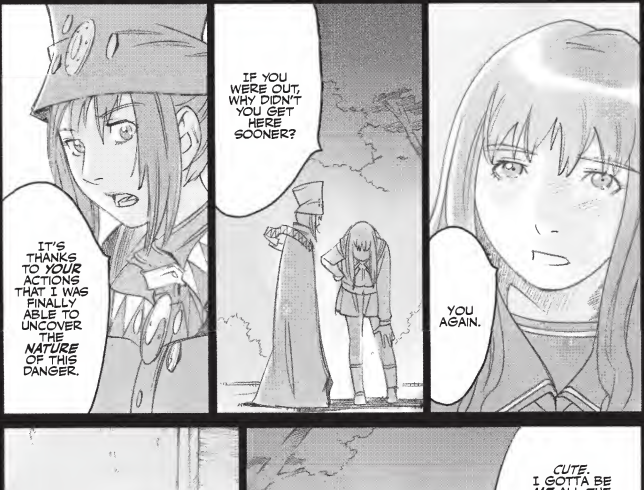

NOW, SHIRO-KUN!
FIRE!
TWANG
THWOCK

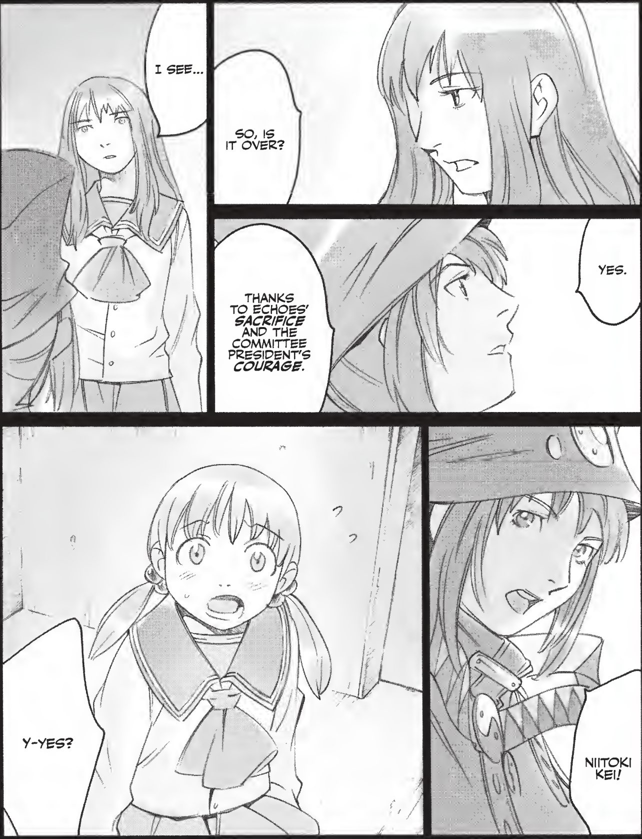

SHIRO-KUN!
AIM FOR THE *HEAD!!*

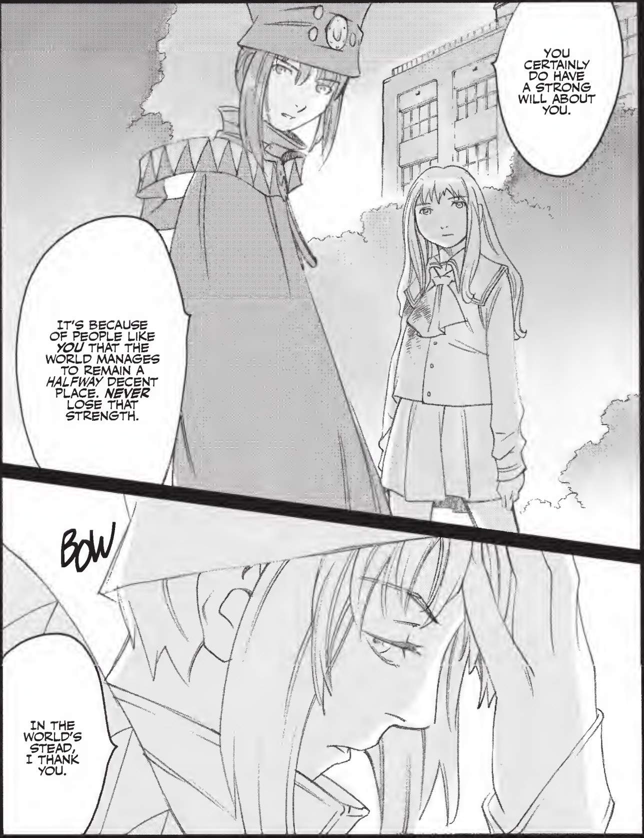

SAOTOME-KUN...
THWOCK

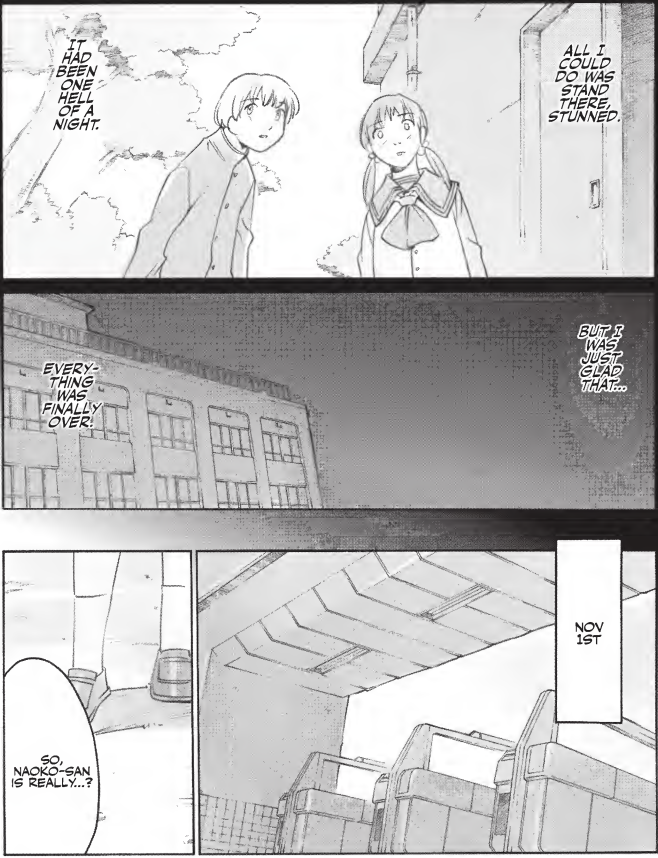

CRKK
CRAK
WH-WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
YOU KNOW HIM?
I DON'T KNOW. HE FOUND ME WHILE I WAS RUNNING AND TOLD ME TO GET MY BOW.
I...KIND OF KNOW... *OF* HIM...

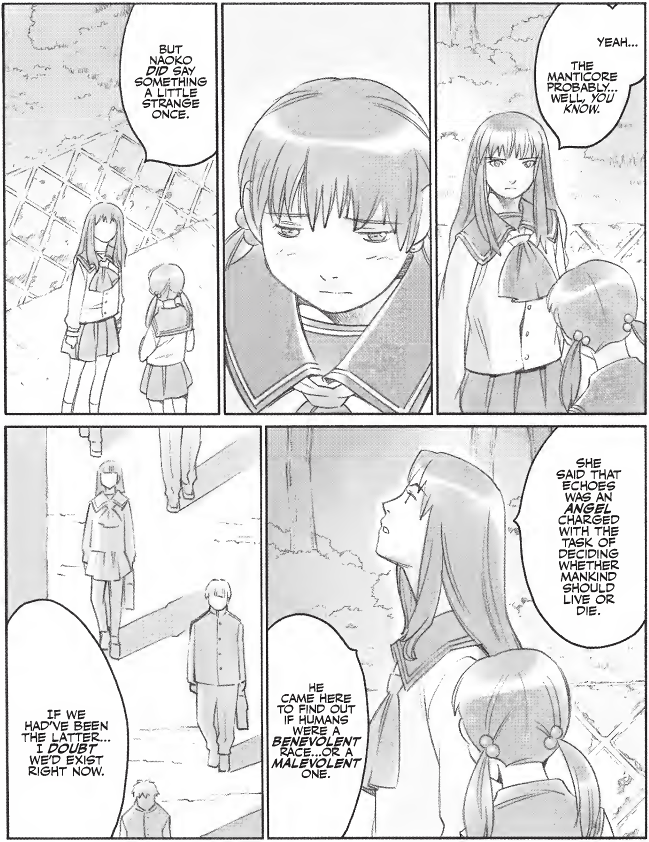

ゴ
GLUNK
ゴ
GLUNK
UNNNH...
ECHOES GAVE UP PART OF HIS *LIFE* FOR YOU. IT SEEMS YOU'VE ESCAPED *DEATH* YET AGAIN.
HELLO...
FIRE WITCH.

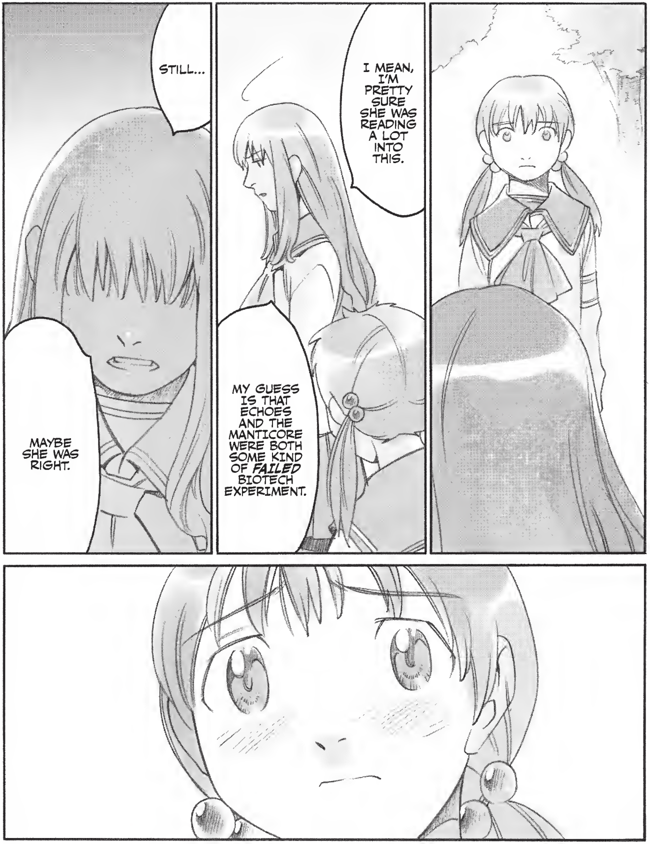

YOU AGAIN.
IF YOU WERE OUT, WHY DIDN'T YOU GET HERE SOONER?
IT'S THANKS TO *YOUR* ACTIONS THAT I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO UNCOVER THE *NATURE* OF THIS DANGER.
CUTE. I GOTTA BE *ME* ALL THE DAMN TIME, BUT YOU ONLY BOTHER COMIN' OUT WHEN THE *SHIT* HITS THE FAN. YOU'RE ONE SELFISH *BASTARD*, YOU KNOW THAT?
DON'T SAY THAT.

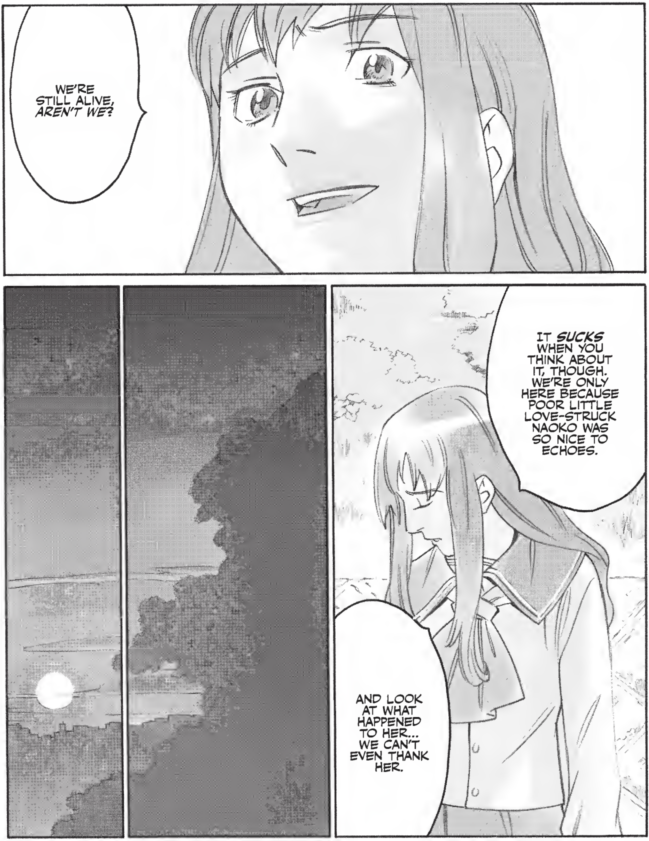

I SEE...
SO, IS IT OVER?
YES.
THANKS TO ECHOES' *SACRIFICE* AND THE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT'S *COURAGE*.
NIITOKI KEI!
Y-YES?

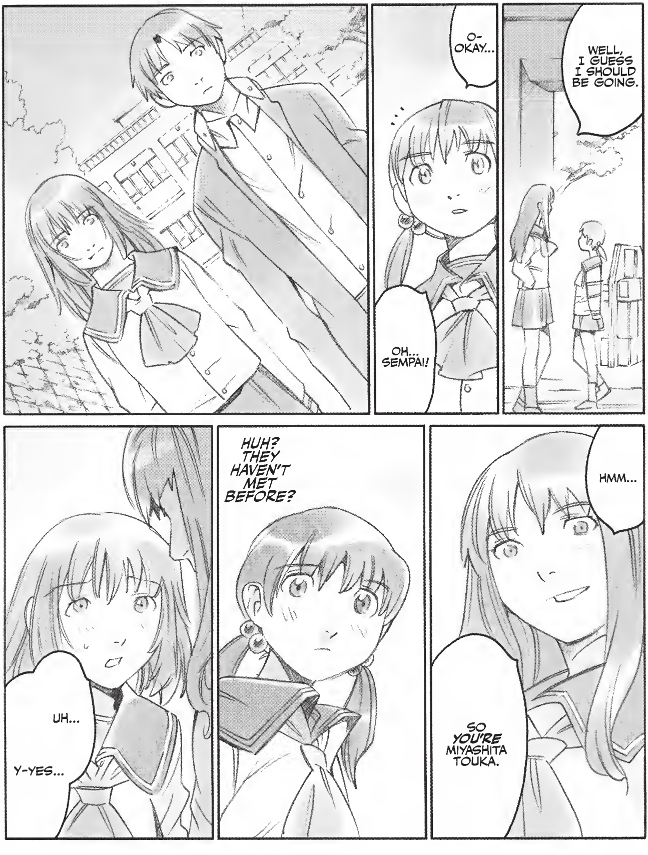

YOU CERTAINLY DO HAVE A STRONG WILL ABOUT YOU.
IT'S BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE *YOU* THAT THE WORLD MANAGES TO REMAIN A *HALFWAY* DECENT PLACE. ***NEVER*** LOSE THAT STRENGTH.
BOW
IN THE WORLD'S STEAD, I THANK YOU.

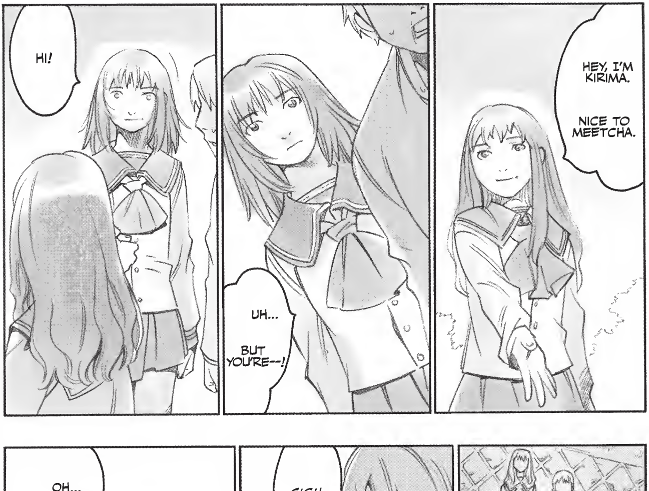

ALL I COULD DO WAS STAND THERE, STUNNED.
IT HAD BEEN ONE HELL OF A NIGHT.
BUT I WAS JUST GLAD THAT...
EVERYTHING WAS FINALLY OVER.
NOV 1ST
SO, NAOKO-SAN IS REALLY...?

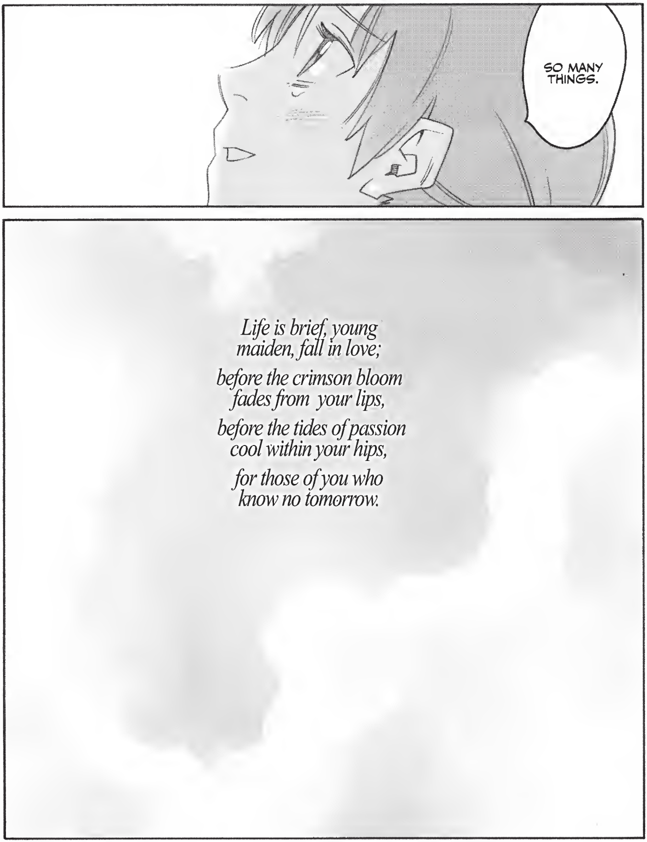

YEAH...
THE MANTICORE PROBABLY... WELL, *YOU KNOW.*
BUT NAOKO *DID* SAY SOMETHING A LITTLE STRANGE ONCE.
SHE SAID THAT ECHOES WAS AN ***ANGEL*** CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF DECIDING WHETHER MANKIND SHOULD LIVE OR DIE.
HE CAME HERE TO FIND OUT IF HUMANS WERE A ***BENEVOLENT*** RACE...OR A ***MALEVOLENT*** ONE.
IF WE HAD'VE BEEN THE LATTER... I ***DOUBT*** WE'D EXIST RIGHT NOW.


I MEAN, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE WAS READING A LOT INTO THIS.
MY GUESS IS THAT ECHOES AND THE MANTICORE WERE BOTH SOME KIND OF *FAILED* BIOTECH EXPERIMENT.
STILL...
MAYBE SHE WAS RIGHT.


WE'RE STILL ALIVE, *AREN'T WE?*
IT ***SUCKS*** WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THOUGH. WE'RE ONLY HERE BECAUSE POOR LITTLE LOVE-STRUCK NAOKO WAS SO NICE TO ECHOES.
AND LOOK AT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER... WE CAN'T EVEN THANK HER.


WELL, I GUESS I SHOULD BE GOING.
O-OKAY...
OH... SEMPAI!
HMM...
SO *YOU'RE* MIYASHITA TOUKA.
HUH? THEY HAVEN'T MET BEFORE?
UH...
Y-YES...


HEY, I'M KIRIMA.
NICE TO MEETCHA.
UH... BUT YOU'RE--!
HI!
SIGH...
WHAT'S UP?
OH... SO MANY THINGS.


SO MANY THINGS.

Life is brief, young
maiden, fall in love;

before the crimson bloom
fades from your lips,

before the tides of passion
cool within your hips,

for those of you who
know no tomorrow.

THE END

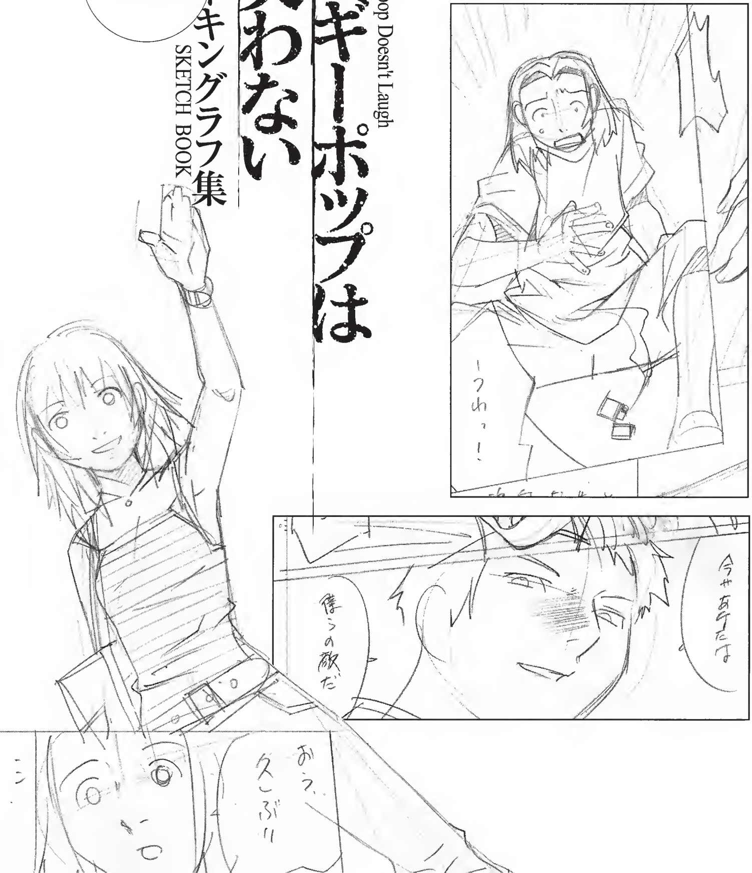
ブギーポップは笑わない

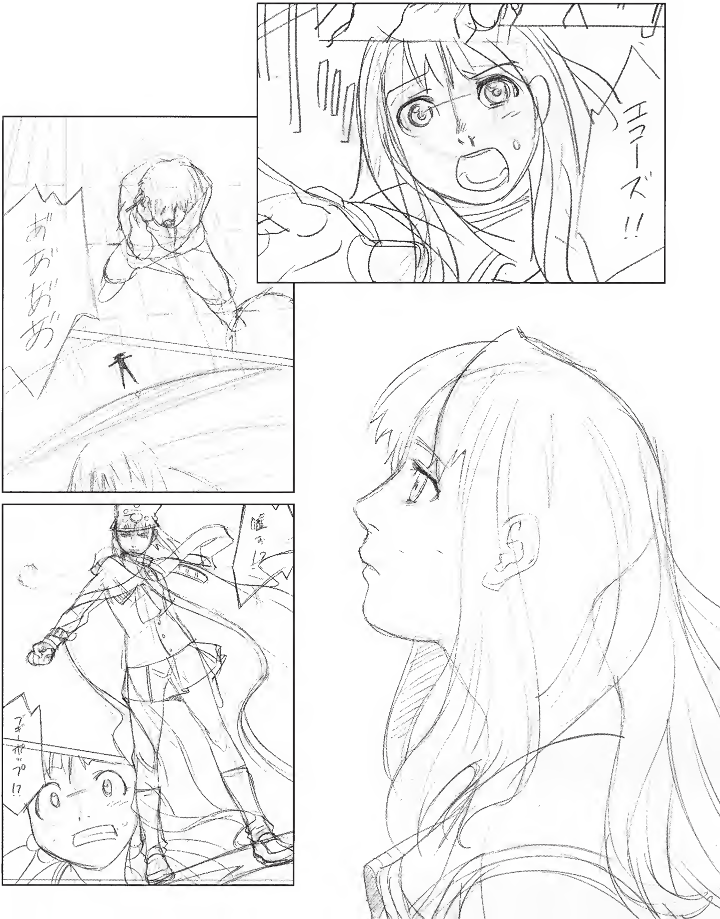
Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh

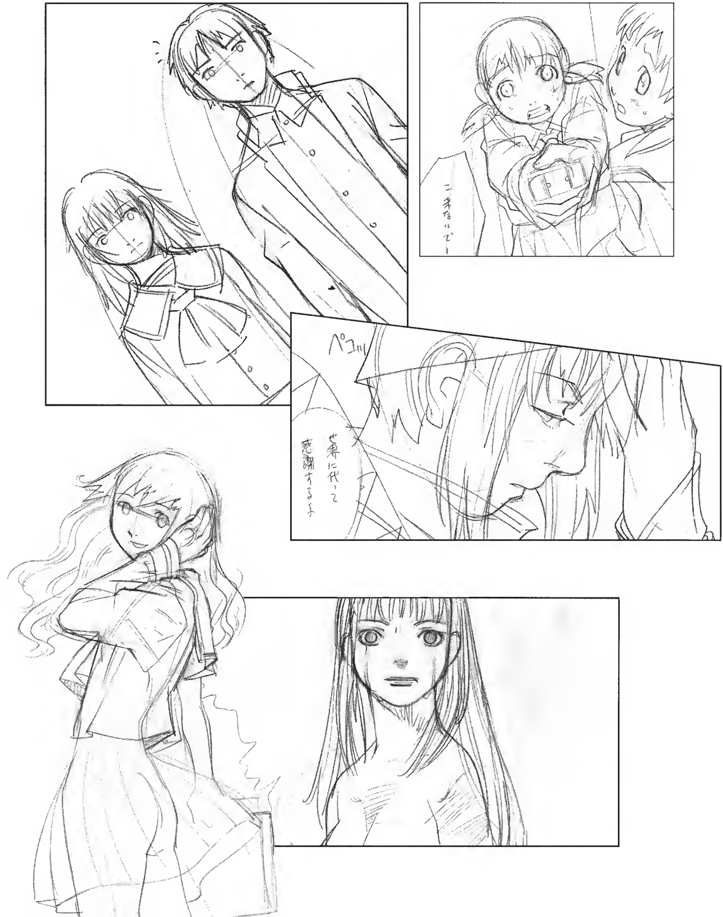
メイキングラフ集

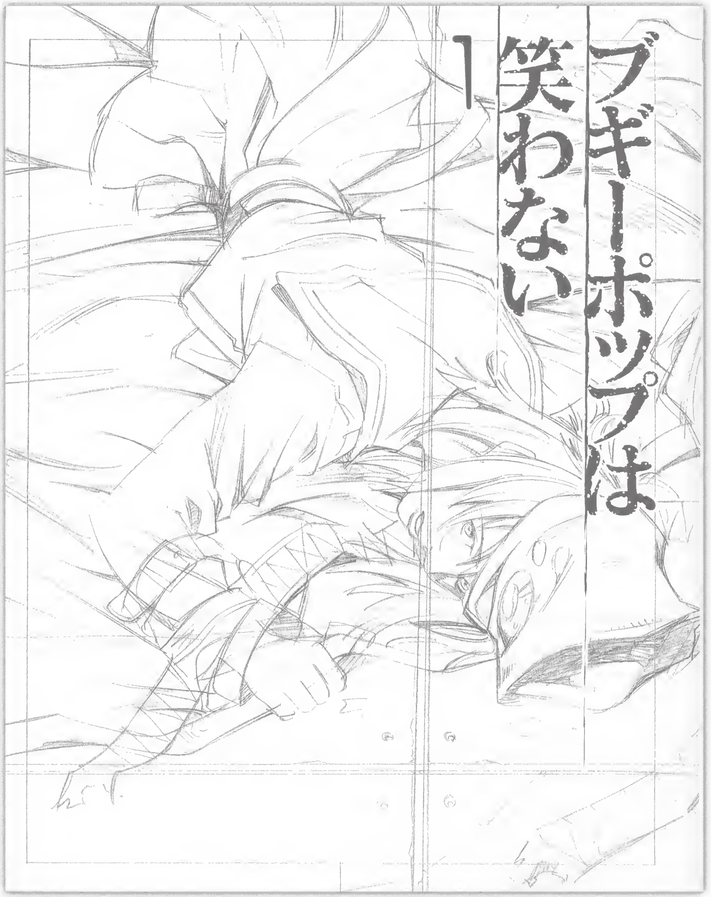
SKETCH BOOK

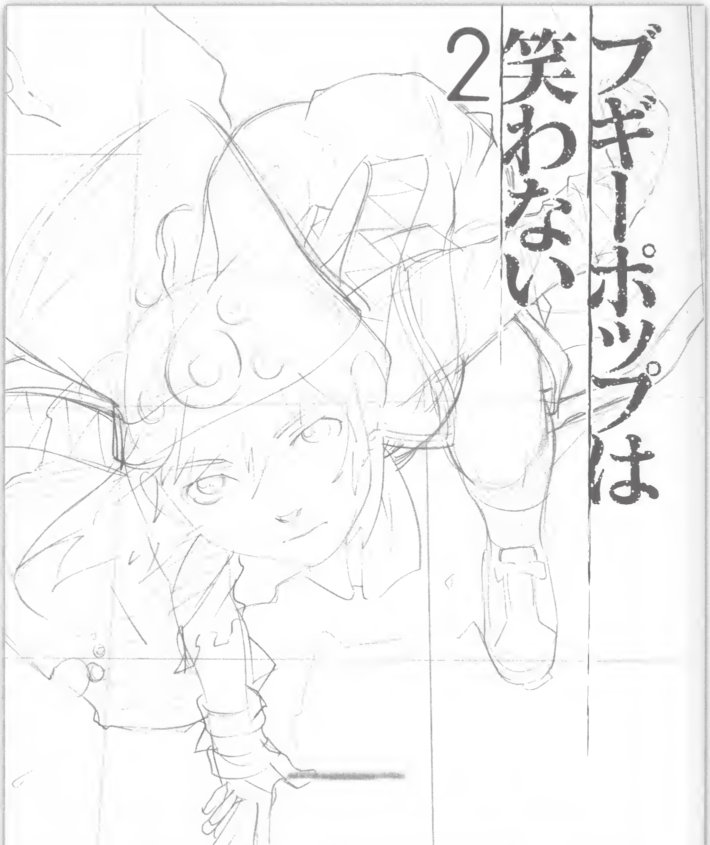
Vol.2


ーうわっ！
今やあなたは
僕らの敵だ
おう、久しぶり!!


エコーズ!!
お゙お゙お゙お゙
嘘ぉ!?
ブギーポップ!?


こ来ないで…
ペコッ
世界に代って感謝するよ


ブギーポップは
笑わない
1

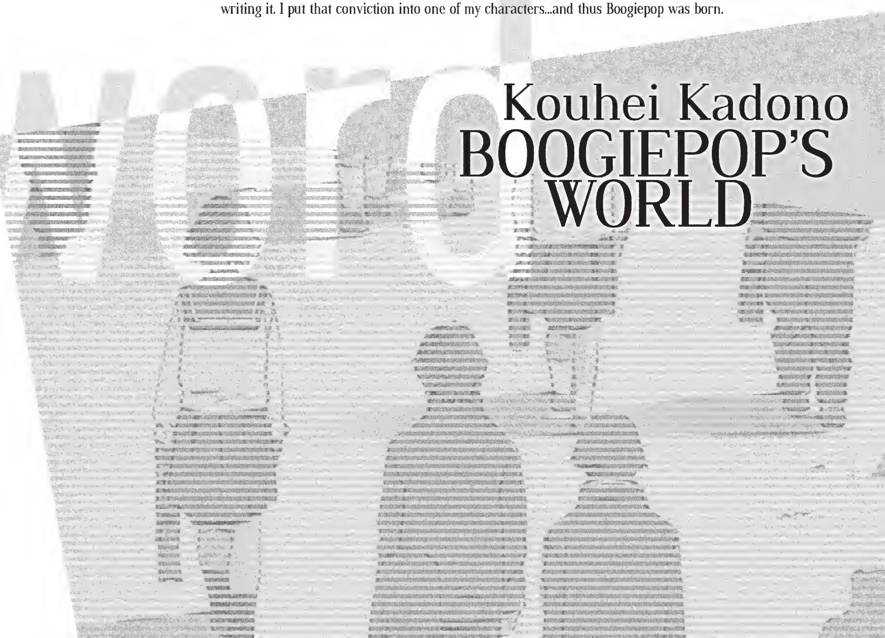

ブギーポップは
笑わない
2

Afterword

Kouhei Kadono

BOOGIEPOP'S WORLD

I was at the end of my rope. Naturally, I'm speaking of my state of mind at the time I wrote *Boogiepop and Others*. I was flat out broke, and an editor at one of the publishing houses had started saying things like, "There's no point in you sending us anything else," and it felt like the realization that I wasn't going to ever accomplish anything by writing novels. It was like I was just hovering around the outskirts of my life. It under that sort of pressure that wrote the book. Even now, I sometimes wonder why I chose to set it in a high school, considering how little I had ever managed to accomplish there. Granted, I had written quite a few novels by then, but it was the first time one had actually set one in a high school. I had been convinced I couldn't write about it, since I had basically never done anything of importance during my time in school, but somehow, I changed my mind. I remember being absolutely convinced that I could write this book, even before I started writing it. I put that conviction into one of my characters...and thus Boogiepop was born.

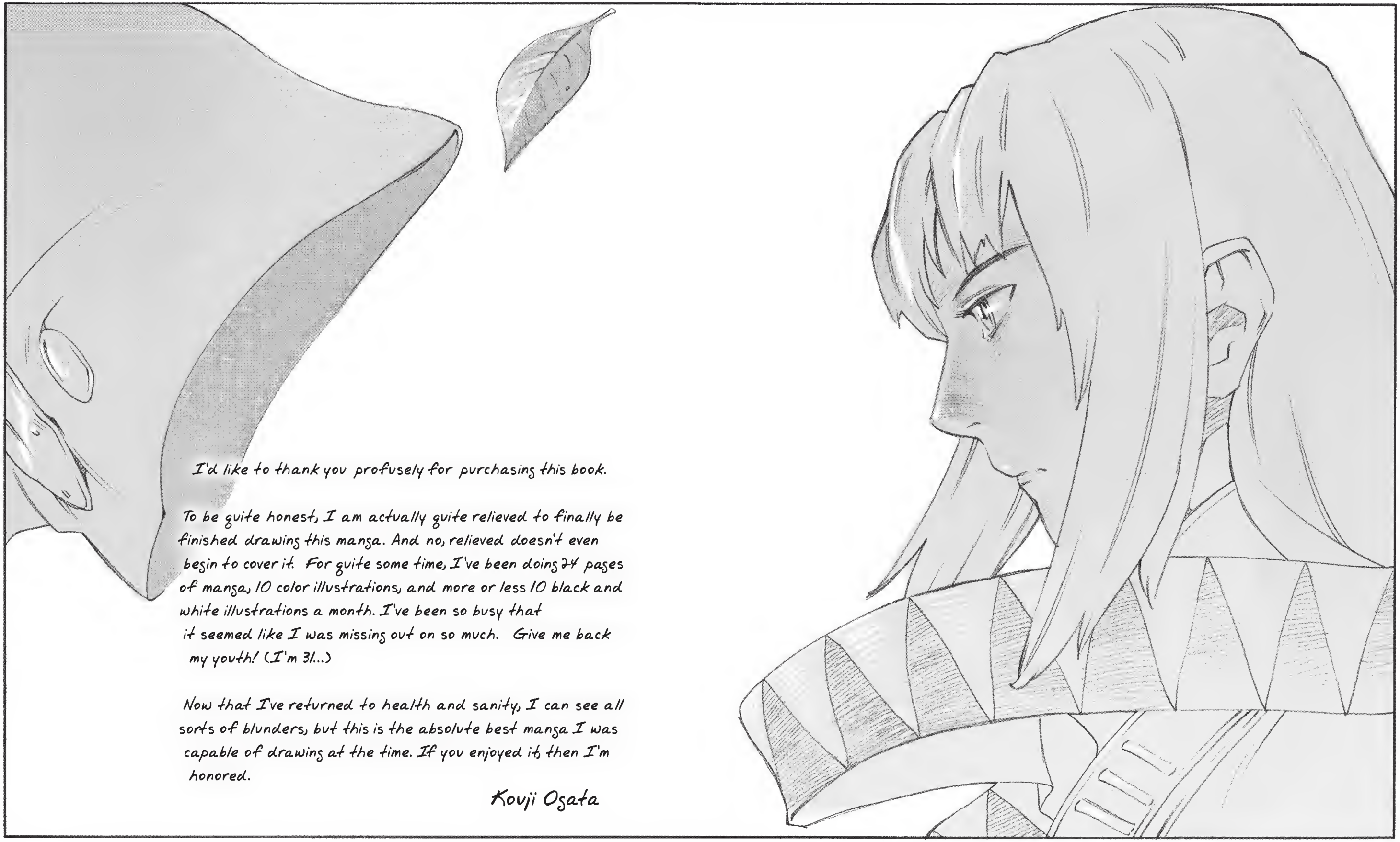


Of course, Boogiepop is not technically a character—he's more of a phenomenon. He's not a reflection of my personality, or an excuse to air my opinions, but for some reason, he is always completely confident. His speeches are strange, and his clothes even stranger, but he's neither embarrassed by it nor defiantly proud of them. He's just strange—both immobile and unwavering. I gave him the name Boogiepop because bubbles have such a frightening tension to them that they burst at the slightest vibration. But the story is, in a sense, always chasing after some sort of vibration, so he ended up not being dramatic at all. Lord only knew if the book would sell, so putting a character like that in it should have been cause for hesitation (after all, I'd been rejected before on exactly those grounds), but for some reason, I didn't feel like that at all. Instead, I slapped him down on the roof with a sense of utter calm, "If he's not in it, there's no point in writing the book." The moment he was there, everything seemed so easy. I'd known it before I even started writing. When I'd long since given up trying to follow incomprehensible classes and sat staring out of the window at the roof of the opposite building, I'd daydreamed about how great it would be if someone weird was up there. This was my only source of conviction, and armed with that quiet certainty, I attempted to write good books to sell to a world I'd long since decided had no value.

But inevitably, the more I wrote, the more the characters took on lives of their own, despite my best efforts to the contrary, and lots of scenes I thought Boogiepop should be in, no longer welcomed him. Takeda Keiji, Suema Kazuko, Saotome Masami, Niitoki Kei—each chapter's main character came alive and lived in their school in a way I never had. "I never went to a school like this..." I thought, growing a little sad as I wrote. And the novel I thought I was writing at the end of my rope ended up being about a world that was self-centered, odd, and bittersweet. I still dream about the school this book is set in, but even now, I'm just sitting there, doing nothing. Boogiepop has never once shown up in my dreams. And I'm still writing every novel like I'm at the end of my rope. Part of me wants to moan about this, but as Boogiepop would say, "That's the way the world is." That's the kind of guy he is. Oh well. The End.

(Is this reminiscing or bitching?)
(Whatever.)

BGM "Heartbreaker" by LED ZEPPELIN



I'd like to thank you profusely for purchasing this book.

To be quite honest, I am actually quite relieved to finally be finished drawing this manga. And no, relieved doesn't even begin to cover it. For quite some time, I've been doing 24 pages of manga, 10 color illustrations, and more or less 10 black and white illustrations a month. I've been so busy that it seemed like I was missing out on so much. Give me back my youth! (I'm 31...)

Now that I've returned to health and sanity, I can see all sorts of blunders, but this is the absolute best manga I was capable of drawing at the time. If you enjoyed it, then I'm honored.

Kouji Osata

BOOGIEPOP
The Ultimate Guide PART 2
by Lesley Smith

Boogiepop: a haunting series that has spawned legions of fans across the planet. For those of you who've never seen the anime or the movie, welcome to the second installment of the ultimate guide covering all things *Boogiepop*!

The beam of light featured at the climax of *Boogiepop and Others* was not the end of the story, but merely the beginning of the epilogue. From January 6, 2000 to March 22, 2000, a twelve-episode anime series took Japan by storm and added a whole new dimension to the already complex mythology of the *Boogiepop* franchise. This series was called *Boogiepop Phantom*.

Boogiepop Phantom is often mentioned in the same breath as *Serial Experiments Lain* and the more recent *Paranoia Agent*. All three series share a philosophic style and a dark, almost disturbed, feel that encourages the viewer to pay extra close attention and draw his or her own conclusions from the events shown. None of the answers are ever simple and a true understanding of the show's deeper meaning may not even be truly found until the second or third viewing. For trivia buffs, *Lain* and *Boogiepop Phantom* are often noted as share a voice actress-that of Shimizu Kaori who provides not only the voice of Lain herself, but also Miyashita Touka in *Boogiepop Phantom*.

Storyline

One night, a bright beam of light was seen shooting up to the heavens from the location of Shinyo Academy. Moments later, an electromagnetic pulse rippled across the city destroying computers and causing millions of homes to go dark. The form of Yurihara Minako, which the Manticore adopted, was gone and the Academy students were continuing on with their lives...but all is not finished.

Boogiepop remains, despite completing his mission and vanquishing Manticore. However, not everything is as it seems. As fate would have it, there is actually a Boogiepop doppelganger running around who, out of "respect" for the original, has dubbed himself "Boogiepop Phantom." Despite the fact that both of these Boogiepops dress the same, it is possible to tell the two apart: the original Boogiepop possesses Miyashita Touka's short stature and her face, while Boogiepop Phantom is taller, has a more feminine voice and possesses the face of Manticore's final form, Yurihara Minako.

Boogiepop Phantom is one of the more prominent characters in the series, even though he only appears for a relatively short period of time. His choice of names is apt as he is indeed a phantom—an immaterial being created by a combination of Manticore's attempt to survive its physical destruction and Boogiepop's own memories.

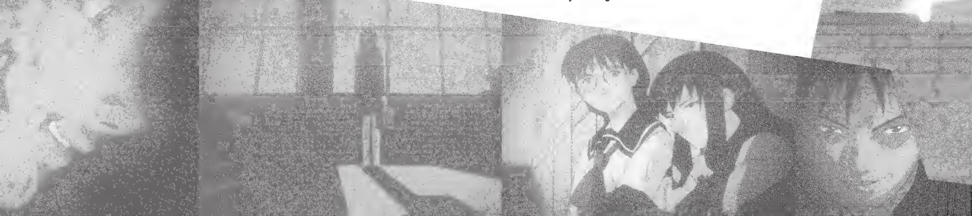
Since the night when the beam of light split the sky, all has not been right in the city. An aurora can be seen in the sky and the pulse that expanded across the city did not just affect electronics, but also people. As a result, various students at Shinyo Academy and also Hijiridani High School began exhibiting abilities they had not possessed before that night.

BOOGIEPOP PHANTOM ©2001 Kouhei Kadono/Mediaworks.

Fractured Timeline

Each episode in the series focuses on a particular person and events are told in the same non-linear, vignette style found in both the books and the live action movie. The series itself covers three specific time periods: five years before the events of *Boogiepop and Others* when a serial killer was active in the city; the recent past contained in *Boogiepop and Others*—such as the climax of the novel or earlier events such as Saotome peddling Manticore's drug; and finally, a period of time set in the present that spans the months after the beam of light.

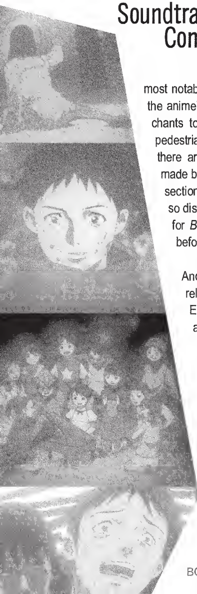
To explain this to the viewer, each scene is broken down and numbered with the location and the time period indicated. This method also retains the omnipresent feel of the entire *Boogiepop* franchise by showing the same scene or events a number of times from different perspectives, often out of chronological order. In the case of the anime series, this can leave the viewer quite confused and it takes another couple of episodes before the context is discovered. This method also allows for some of the more interesting scenes to be viewed, including answering the question of where exactly Boogiepop got his costume from and the precise event that triggered his first appearance five years ago.



Character Designs

Despite introducing a vast number of new characters not referred to in the novels, *Boogiepop Phantom* also sees the return of Kirima Nagi, Suema Kazuko and, of course, Miyashita Touka, amongst others. The character designs for these more familiar characters, including Saotome and Boogiepop, are also based on those drawn by Kouji Ogata, the illustrator of the novels.

This anime itself was rendered in a style that gives the entire series a dark tone and bleak feeling. Even the city itself feels claustrophobic. *Boogiepop Phantom* blurs the lines between horror and science-fiction in a way that forces viewers to contemplate philosophical questions about life, death, and the very natures of both time and reality. The only way to truly grasp what's going on is to re-watch each episode multiple times and immerse oneself in the entire *Boogiepop* mythology.



Soundtrack and Commentary

No discussion about *Boogiepop Phantom* would be complete without touching on one of its most notable features—its soundtrack. Best described as "unique," the anime's soundtrack covers everything from haunting Gregorian chants to hard-core electronic beats. In addition to single-noted pedestrian noise that reverberates throughout the entire series, there are a number of interesting sound effects, like the noise made by a CD skipping, which can be heard in the most unlikely of sections of the anime. Indeed, many of the sound effects are either so distorted they cannot be identified or were invented specifically for *Boogiepop Phantom* and have simply never been recorded before.

Another aspect which made *Boogiepop Phantom's* Region 1 DVD release both anticipated and unique were the accompanying English-language commentaries by the producer Jeff Thompson and the ADR Director Joe Digiorgi. Still a rarity on the majority of anime DVDs out there, the commentaries give another dimension to the series by offering insight into the monumental task of translating the series into English and further tidbits about the episodes that casual viewers might miss.

When you've finished watching *Boogiepop Phantom*, be sure to pick up *Boogiepop Dual* Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 for the third and fourth parts of our *Boogiepop: The Ultimate Guide* as we delve into the other novels and books that comprise this unforgettable franchise.

BOOGIEPOP PHANTOM ©2001 Kouhei Kadono/Mediaworks.

Cast of Characters

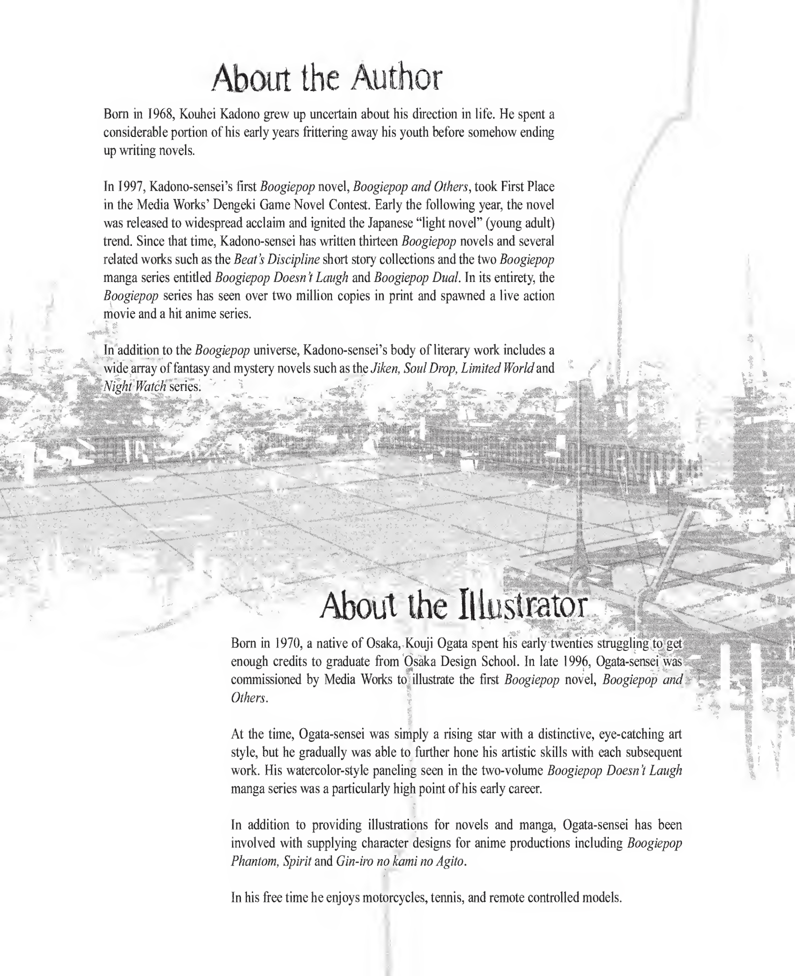
The twelve episodes focus on a number of characters—including "Fire Witch" Kirima Nagi—that have been affected by the events surrounding the beam of light. Some characters have gained special abilities, while others have been forced to cross paths with characters like Boogiepop Phantom, the mysterious butterfly girl known as Kisaragi Manaka, or the psychic essence which is all that remains of the Manticore—an essence that adopts various forms including that of Saotome Masami. Added to this, each of the characters—be they good or evil—have their own lives, loves and dreams, as well as a good measure of problems that affect their personalities making them feel more rounded and real.

The overall theme of the series is one concerning evolution; hence its usage as the volume tag on The Right Stuf International's Region 1 DVDs—each of which were numbered Evolution 1 through 4.

Each of the students displaying new abilities—from Jonouchi's ability to remove the bugs of emotion on a person's heart to Manaka's gift of expressing memories as butterflies—are evolving and this is something that the mysterious Towa Organization wants stopped at all costs. Ironically, many of these gifts were the results of drugs injected into patients by the Towa Organizations that had been lying dormant for years and were only triggered into existence when the beam of light awakened them.

As a result of this, the Towa Organization and its weird assortment of agents appear throughout the series. Some of the more colorful agents include: artificially created or 'composite' humans like Mo Murder, Scarecrow, Spooky E and Snake Eye (who has taken on the appearance of a police officer named Morita). While an important aspect of the series, very little is actually discovered about this secretive and mysterious agency aside from the fact that they wish to kill anyone showing signs of being further along the evolutionary path than regular humans.

This is where Boogiepop Phantom comes in; his purpose is to clean up the mess caused by the Towa Organization. This involves spiriting the altered students to safety and placing them in stasis in unused tunnels beneath the city—presumably until the day the rest of humanity catches up with them. He also has to deal with the after-effects of the event that created him, such as the resurrection of Manaka by Echoes (who, as a result, now possesses his speech impediment) and all before the electromagnetic field recovers. Failure will spell not only the end of the psychic residue of Manticore, but also the various apparitions like Poom Poom and Boogiepop Phantom himself.



About the Author

Born in 1968, Kouhei Kadono grew up uncertain about his direction in life. He spent a considerable portion of his early years frittering away his youth before somehow ending up writing novels.

In 1997, Kadono-sensei's first *Boogiepop* novel, *Boogiepop and Others*, took First Place in the Media Works' Dengeki Game Novel Contest. Early the following year, the novel was released to widespread acclaim and ignited the Japanese "light novel" (young adult) trend. Since that time, Kadono-sensei has written thirteen *Boogiepop* novels and several related works such as the *Beat's Discipline* short story collections and the two *Boogiepop* manga series entitled *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh* and *Boogiepop Dual*. In its entirety, the *Boogiepop* series has seen over two million copies in print and spawned a live action movie and a hit anime series.

In addition to the *Boogiepop* universe, Kadono-sensei's body of literary work includes a wide array of fantasy and mystery novels such as the *Jiken, Soul Drop, Limited World* and *Night Watch* series.

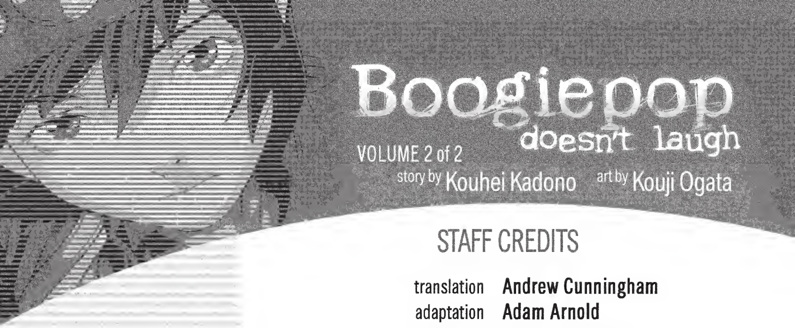
About the Illustrator

Born in 1970, a native of Osaka, Kouji Ogata spent his early twenties struggling to get enough credits to graduate from Osaka Design School. In late 1996, Ogata-sensei was commissioned by Media Works to illustrate the first *Boogiepop* novel, *Boogiepop and Others*.

At the time, Ogata-sensei was simply a rising star with a distinctive, eye-catching art style, but he gradually was able to further hone his artistic skills with each subsequent work. His watercolor-style paneling seen in the two-volume *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh* manga series was a particularly high point of his early career.

In addition to providing illustrations for novels and manga, Ogata-sensei has been involved with supplying character designs for anime productions including *Boogiepop Phantom, Spirit* and *Gin-iro no kami no Agito*.

In his free time he enjoys motorcycles, tennis, and remote controlled models.



Boogiepop doesn't laugh

VOLUME 2 of 2

story by Kouhei Kadono art by Kouji Ogata

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publisher **Seven Seas Entertainment**

BOOGIEPOP DOESN'T LAUGH Vol. 2
BOOGIEPOP WA WARAWANAI Vol. 2

© KOUHEI KADONO, KOUJI OGATA 2002

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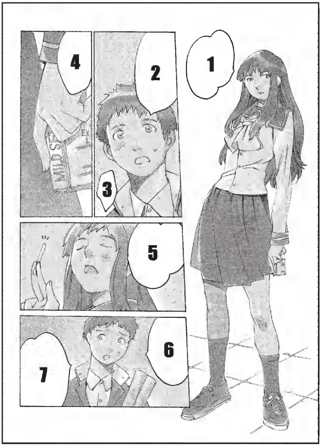
THE END

YOU'RE READING THE WRONG WAY

This is the last page of
Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh Volume 2.



This book reads from right to left, Japanese style. To read from the beginning, flip the book over to the other side, start with the top right panel, and take it from there.

If this is your first time reading manga, just follow the diagram. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get used to it! Have fun!

Once you've seen me...
you can't be allowed to live.

In the blink of an eye, a young girl's precious life is snuffed out and the deadly Manticore's well-laid plans for world domination get shot to hell. With time running out, can Nagi Kirima and the mysterious "Angel of Death" known as Boogiepop put an end to the murderous Manticore's reign of terror before even more innocent lives are lost...?

Find out in this thrilling, extra-sized conclusion to *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh*!

FEATURING ALL-NEW SCENES NOT FOUND IN THE *BOOGIEPOP AND OTHERS* NOVEL!

"This world is full of flaws."

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